Thomas Edward Brown

Selwyn G. Simpson

THOMAS EDWARD BROWN.

AN APPRECIATION.

ERRATA.

Page 25, line 29, *read* "does not state" *for* "does state."
,, 37, line 9, reference note omitted: *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 137. To S. T. Irwin.
,, 41, line 13, *read* "show" *for* "shows."
,, 45, first footnote, *read* "p. 702" *for* "p. 728."
,, 46, second footnote, *read* "p. 659" *for* "p. 359."
,, 55, lines 13 and 15, figure [1] refers to second footnote, and figure [2] refers to first footnote.
,, 81, line 14, *read* "fathers" *for* "father."
,, 86, first footnote, *read* "*Poems*" before "In the Coach"; third footnote, *read* "1894. *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 74."
,, 92, line 4, ellipsis marks should follow to denote omission of lines; line 8, *read* "mixed lek in general" *for* "mixed in general."
,, 102, first footnote, *read* "p. 523" *for* "p. 522."
,, 106, footnote, *read* "p. 578" *for* "577."
,, 139, line 8, "I'm off" should commence next line.
,, 150, line 15, reference figure[2] omitted at end of quotation; lines 21 and 22, *read* "fuge" *for* "fudge."
,, 161, footnote, *read* "p. 341" *for* "p. 349."
,, 165, omit line 26.
,, 172, line 20, *read* "Nor nobody else" *for* "No, nobody else."
,, 187, first footnote, *read* "*Poems*, 'Sad, sad,' p. 694" *for* "p. 649."
,, 190, second footnote, *read* "*Letters*, vol. i. p. 133. To Rev. E. M. Kissack (August 7th, 1888)" *for* "vol. ii. p. 138," etc.
,, 191, first footnote, *read* "*Letters*, vol. ii. p. 138. To S. T. Irwin (November 10th, 1895)."
,, 213, footnote, *read* "p. 699" *for* "p. 669."
,, 215, footnote, *read* "1888" *for* "1880."
,, 233, line 8, *read* "1893" *for* "1892."
,, 234, line 20, *read* "Manx Character" *for* "Manx Characters"; second footnote, *read* "p. 12" *for* "p. 63."
,, 242, line 11, *read* "Hughes-Games" *for* "Hughes. 'Games.'"

THOMAS EDWARD BROWN

THE MANX POET:

AN APPRECIATION.

BY

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SIDNEY SUSSEX COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

WITH PREFACE BY

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CONTENTS.

PREFATORY NOTE.

I DESIRE to thank the many friends who have helped me in various ways in the preparation of this monograph, especially Canon and Mrs. Wilson, who very kindly corrected my MS. and gave me much information and valuable advice. I am glad to acknowledge my indebtedness to Mrs. Williamson (T. E. Brown's sister) and Miss Brown for their help, and for sending me many unpublished MSS.; also to Miss Lawrence, Mr. Pleigner, Mr. Irwin, and Canon Kewley, for giving me the benefit of their personal reminiscences. My thanks are also due to Messrs. Archibald Constable & Co., for permission to quote from *The Letters of T. E. Brown;* and to Messrs. Macmillan & Co., for allowing me to give quotations from *The Collected Poems of T. E. Brown.*

WORCESTER,
November 1906.

PREFACE.

A FULL and final appreciation of T. E. Brown as a poet has, in my judgment, still to be written; but I cordially welcome the essay of my young friend, to which he has asked me to prefix a few words of introduction. His essay is genuine and discerning, and I welcome it all the more because he had not, as I had, the immense privilege and pleasure of knowing Brown personally. He belongs to a later generation; he therefore in some degree anticipates the judgment of posterity.

Brown's contemporaries have inadequately, as it seems to me, recognized his claims to be among the fixed stars of literature, and Mr. Selwyn Simpson's essay will do something to create in the next generation a wider and more serious study of Brown as a poet.

To those of us who knew Brown as a friend it will be always impossible to dissociate his poems from our recollections of himself; and yet we cannot be far wrong in seeing in his poems some of those charms which we one and all felt in his conversation and presence. There is in his poems, whether narrative or lyric, in the first place a refreshing originality in observation and thought and expression. There is nothing second-hand; nothing

that suggests an imitation or even a faint echo of some other literature. It is not "images reflected from mirror to mirror" that we find in his pages, but the very living men and women themselves, as fresh, I will venture to say, as they are in Homer and Chaucer and Shakespeare. He sees nature and human life direct with his own eyes, and feels all their elemental emotions in himself and not through any literary medium or conventions. It was this instant detection of any fragment of real human nature in any and every one whom he met that made him so incomparable as a friend, and so delightful even as a chance companion. It is surely possible for others to see these qualities, as we see them, all through his writings. Mr. Simpson has shown that it is possible. Then, again, Brown is a consummate teller of stories, a spinner of yarns. The plot of "Betsy Lee," or of "Tommy Big-Eyes," or of "The Doctor," would furnish a novel: each is full of well-devised incident; and the story never flags, even where, for artistic purposes, it seems to hang, and the old sailor confesses that he is

> "Spinnin' round and round
> And never knowin' where am I bound."

To be a consummate teller of stories is a rare gift, and distinct from what is usually spoken of as the poetic faculty.

There is another characteristic of Brown's stories in the elemental character of the forces which move

the men and women in them. They are permanent and noble emotions of human nature. There is little that is rare or exceptional; there is no study of the morbid in any of them. Every one of them is of the broadly human type; and they are put before us irradiated by a love which glorifies and sanctifies what is wholesome and common.

And the language fits the people. It is the language of common life, redolent of the fo'c'sle and the sea, with all the Celtic raciness and vividness of idiom. The language so fits the characters that it is inconceivable that the story should have been told otherwise. One reads a fo'c'sle yarn, or, better still, listens to it read or recited, and it is old Tom Baynes, dear Tom Baynes himself, that speaks. Never for an instant does Brown fail in the art of concealing the art. Never does one detect in the garb of the sailor the learned Oxford scholar, the widely read student of literature, the practised critic. There is no effort to think out what "Tom Baynes," or "The Doctor," or "The Pazon," would say at a crisis. The man himself is there—his words are inevitable; they could not have been otherwise.

I have said nothing of the lyric poems, which are also well handled by Mr. Simpson. They will probably appeal to fewer readers, because each is the expression of a mood or thought or feeling, which are not universal; but they show the same originality and truth and felicity of expression that mark the narrative poems, and not a few are, I

believe, destined to hold a permanent place in our literature. This, time alone can show.

The fact, however, remains that at present in England the number of readers and lovers of Brown is limited. There are probably many more readers of "Evangeline" and "Enoch Arden" than there are of "The Doctor." The difference cannot be wholly due to the fact that Brown writes in idiom. Multitudes read stories in Scotch dialect, which is more remote from English than is Manx. I can offer no explanation except that Brown has not yet been discovered by the ordinary reader. Great writers found him long ago. George Eliot wrote enthusiastically to Macmillan when "Betsy Lee" first appeared. Max Müller, to whom with others, when staying at the Maloja Hotel in 1885, I read "The Doctor," put it in his list of the 100 best books of the world. He borrowed my copy, then unpublished, and read it to Browning at Venice, and afterwards to the Empress Frederick at Berlin; and told me of their delight in it; and others known in the literary world, rank Brown among the Great Poets.

His day will come, and the Essay of my friend will help to hasten the day. Meantime, happy are those who have learned to love and enjoy Brown's poems; and happiest of all those who also loved and enjoyed the man himself. "We shall not look upon his like again."

JAMES M. WILSON.

COLLEGE, WORCESTER,
November 1906.

THOMAS EDWARD BROWN:

AN APPRECIATION.

INTRODUCTION.

"THE fortunate accident of personal friendship shall not restrain me from saying that Mr. Brown is the first of Manxmen living or dead. I trust my countrymen recognize this;—their children will."[1]

In these terms Mr. Hall Caine speaks of T. E. Brown. Mr. Caine, in his last three words, "*their children will*," has expressed a fact that is every day becoming more evident.

Brown's day is yet to come.

Many up to the present time—because his great love for his native land made him write in the dialect of his countrymen—have regarded him only as an ordinary writer of verse. Men have shrunk from the difficulty of reading his Anglo-Manx; and because of their inability or indifference, have imagined the author unworthy of close attention. Yet Mr. Canton writes—"To the claim of genius

[1] *The Little Man Island*, by Hall Caine, p. 48.

no one who knows Brown will demur. He is not lacking in the essential qualities of a genuine poet. There is a big burly naturalness, a heartiness, a contempt of trick and artifice."[1]

Is the dialect to stand in the way of his fame? Is it a reason to condemn him unread? Who is there, who has any pretensions to literary taste, that does not prefer "Tam o' Shanter" to all the poems Burns wrote to please an Edinburgh aristocracy? And Brown is superior to the Scotchman in intellect, culture, and refinement. "As stories, the poems are full of interest, while as presented by the poet with a rare vividness of diction and style, and an overmastering dramatic power, they are of their kind unequalled."[2] Brown has a power of portraying character and incident alike, and his descriptive passages are unparalleled in modern poetry. His poems show him to have been gifted with humour, pathos, observant knowledge, sympathetic joy, and abounding humanity, all of which he presents with a wonderful force of expression and in instant and persuasive speech.

It is his gift of seeing people as they are, and not as they ought to be, that fills the *Yarns* with vivacity and interest. It is their reality that makes them superior to anything of the kind that has yet been written;—their reality in colour, tone, and language that gives them pre-eminence. Brown

[1] Article in the *Bookman* by Mr. Canton, May 1897.

[2] Article by Mr. William Storr in *The New Review*, December 1897.

writes of a people never before extolled in verse—describes them from personal observation, and uses their syntax and prosody. He does not write Manx as Barnes wrote Dorsetese. He does not, like that poet, compose in English and add local colour afterwards. No; he writes in dialect, because it was engraven on his heart—a dialect that was, in a sense, his own, since it was bound up with every earliest and dearest association. He not only wrote in Manx dialect, but could think in it.

But it is not only as a writer of dialect poems that Brown is famous; he is also an English poet of the highest order. In Brown there is poetry enough and to spare, it is the household bread of his being. Some of his shorter poems in their beauty of feeling, in their delicate and subtle mysticism, are worthy comparisons of George Herbert's lovely stanzas.

Mr. Henley has compared T. E. Brown with Tennyson,[1] and proved—taking "Chalse-a-Killey" and the "May Queen" as examples—the superiority of the Manx poet over the "thrice-laurelled Laureate." But it is useless to compare Brown with the ordinary run of great men. He was *volcanic*. As the Bishop of Hereford says—"His whole nature—head and heart, intellect, imagination, emotion—was cast in a larger and more richly varied mould than that of ordinary men, and I

[1] Introduction to complete edition of Brown's Poems, p. 12.

have often felt that if his great gifts and powers had only been fused just a little differently, he would have been one of the greatest lights in literature of our day. To compare Brown with even the average run of distinguished men who are around us, is like trying to compare the Bay of Naples with an English bay or Scotch loch. We can find beauty in the familiar Northern scenes, but we miss the pent-up forces, the volcanic outbursts, the tropic glow, and all the surprising manifold and tender and sweet-scented outpourings of soul and sunshine, so spontaneous, so inexhaustibly rich, and with the great heart of fire burning and palpitating underneath all the time." [1]

If "true poetry is the remembrance of youth, of love, the embodiment in words of the happiest and holiest moments of life,"[2] then is the poetry of Brown worthy indeed of the highest place in English literature. He is not a poet who, amidst the elegance and leisure of a comfortable life, turns his eyes in search of a rural theme, thinking all the time of Homer and Virgil; but one who puts into words his passionate feelings and humane love for his countrymen.

During his lifetime Brown never came to his own. He had nothing like the reputation he ought to have had. In future generations it will be to his books, and not to any others, that men will

[1] Article in the *Oxford Magazine* by Dr. Percival, November 3rd, 1897.

[2] Professor Jowett's *Plato*, vol. ii. p. 154.

turn when they wish to understand the manners, the humour and pathos, the comedy and tragedy of Manx life.

Already there seems something of the "dawn that shall be day"[1] resting over the sweet Manx-land, lighting up the whole island and sending shafts of light across the sea, where increasing numbers of English readers are learning to delight in the charm of his *Letters*, and to discover fresh beauty in each reading of his verse. So jealous is the author that Brown should not only be considered as the "first of Manxmen living or dead," as one who loved the island and "her people as hardly any other man ever did, as hardly any other man ever can,"[2] but as one in the very front rank of English writers, that he would fain ask his readers to study with him, some of the longer and shorter writings of this man so deserving of honour. But to have a full appreciation of Brown's works we must realize his environment. Before, then, we pass to the consideration of the poems, let us review the outline of his life.

[1] *Evensong*, p. 701; complete edition of poems.

[2] Hall Caine's Tribute in *Isle of Man Times*, November 6th, 1897.

CHAPTER I.

HIS EARLY YEARS:—HIS FATHER—HIS MOTHER—LIFE AT BRADDAN VICARAGE—SCHOOL-DAYS.

"Here comes a poet indeed! And how am I to show him due Honour?"—*England's Antiphon*, chap. xiii. (GEORGE MACDONALD).

HIS FATHER.

IN the Isle of Man, on the 5th of May 1830, Thomas Edward Brown was born, in New Bond Street, Douglas. He was the third son—the sixth of ten children—of the Rev. Robert Brown and Dorothy his wife. His father was a stern, undemonstrative, evangelical clergyman. Mr. Irwin (Brown's friend and the editor of his *Letters*) tells us that his greatest term of praise for his son's work was—"That will do, sir"; and his expression of proud delight in his son's music—"Go on, sir."[1] He had, however, in his character, a marked vein of humanity, a striking illustration of which is given us by his son in one of his letters:—

"Yes, the man was right: I do love the poor

[1] Introductory Memoir to the *Letters*, p. 17.

wastrels. And you are right, I have it from my father. He had a way of taking for granted not only the innate virtue of these outcasts, but their unquestioned respectability. He, at least, never questioned it. The effect was twofold. Some of the 'weak brethren' felt uncomfortable at being met on these terms of equality. My father might have been practising on them the most dreadful irony, and they were 'that shy' and confused. But it was not irony, not a bit of it; just a sense of respect, fine consideration for the poor 'sowls'; well—respect, that's it, respect for all human beings; *his* respect made *them* respectable. Wasn't it grand?. . . He hated hypocrisy, he hated lying, and he hated presumption and pretentiousness. He loved sincerity, truth, and modesty. It seemed as if he felt sure that with these virtues the others could not fail to be present."[1]

Brown's father, though he had never been to a university, was a scholar of great ability and originality. "He was so fastidious about composition that he would make his son read him some fragment of an English classic before answering an invitation." Speaking of the great importance that his father attached to the question of style, his son writes—"To my father, style was like the instinct of personal cleanliness."[2] His love of learning and ardour for composition is conspicuous

[1] *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 90, February 28th, 1895. To M. K.

[2] Introductory Memoir to *Letters*, p. 16.

in his published sermons. A friend of the author told him that he had once heard Mr. Brown (senior) preach at Kirk Braddan, and was struck by the expression of great refinement in his countenance, his musical delivery, and the grace and charm of his style.

Owing to his imperfect vision he committed his sermons to memory. "With his Manx sermons, one of which he preached every Sunday, he took even more pains than with his English. These sermons were delivered in an exquisitely musical voice, a voice steeped in delicacy and vibrant with the most subtle tenderness."[1] This, no doubt, was one of the causes of his "Magnetic faculty of affecting the strong and rugged natures, which were in many respects so sharply contrasted with the delicacy of his own highly-strung and nervous temperament."[2] There was another cause—his potential emotion. If he were stern in his family life, in the pulpit the emotional side of his character sometimes found an outlet. The quotation of his faithful old man-servant's opinion will illustrate this—

"Old John, I think you must have met him there,
My father, somewhere in the fields of rest:
From doubt enlarged, released from mortal care,
Earth's troubles heave no more his tranquil breast.

[1] Speech by T. E. Brown, before the Liverpool Meeting of the Manx Association.

[2] Article by T. E. Brown, in the *Ramsey Church Magazine*.

Oh! tell him what you once to me confessed,
That, all the varied modes of rhetoric trying,
You ever liked 'the Maister's' sermons best
When he was crying."[1]

The Reverend Robert Brown was a musician, and composed two well-known hymn tunes, "Braddon" and "Hatford."[2] He was also a poet. In 1826 he published a volume of poems which dealt chiefly with sacred subjects, and are especially beautiful in their unquestioning, childlike reverence, and for the vein of unaffected piety that runs through them. Mr. Moore claims that his best poems were satires, published in the *Manx Liberal*, which are now forgotten.[3]

His son pronounces his poems to be "very good, good in the style of Dryden or Pope, with a marked leaning towards Byron," and he further remarks that "they were witty, humorous, polished, metrically excellent, and marked by that classical turn of phrase and idea which is always unmistakable."[4] Mr. Irwin tells us that the family were proud to remember that one of his published poems had brought him an appreciative letter from Wordsworth.[5] Such was Brown's father—Celt, poet, scholar, musician, evangelical clergyman.

[1] *Poems*, "Old John," p. 8, in the Collected Poems.

[2] A. W. Moore, *Manx Worthies*.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 34.

[4] Article by T. E. Brown, in *Ramsey Church Magazine*.

[5] Introductory Memoir to *Letters*, p. 16.

HIS MOTHER.

His mother was of Scotch extraction, though born in the Isle of Man.

"I also had a root in Scottish ground."[1]

Speaking of his mother, Brown says—"I wish you had known her, she was a great woman. A pure Borderer she was—her father a Thomson from the Scotch side, her mother a Birkett from the Cumbrian side of Cheviot. I don't suppose the earth contains a stronger race, and she had all its strength—she was typical."[2]

Mrs. Brown was an enthusiastic reader and a great lover of poetry. Besides literary talent she had a great fund of mother wit and humorous originality—of an unusually daring and masculine character—and strong practical common-sense. Her son gives us ample proof in his letters of his affection for her, and of his self-denying efforts to repay in some way all he owed to her.

It is not surprising that Brown was a great man—rendered greater by his own untiring work.

Brown tells us that the Scotch side of his character predominated when he was in Scotland or taking part in some Burns commemoration:—"I felt tremendously moved at that dinner. I *wasna foo*—certainly not with 'Scotch drink'; but I am fairly mad with 'seempathy.' You see I *am* a

[1] *Poems*, "Old John," p. 12. (Collected Edition.)

[2] *Letters*, vol. i. p. 118. To Miss Cannan (March 1st, 1886).

Scotchman, and, upon occasions, I gravitate largely to the Caledonian basis. Some ancient ghost arises within me—ancestral, for that matter—and I can't control it."[1]

HIS EARLY YEARS (1830-45).

At the time of T. E. Brown's birth his father was incumbent of St. Matthew's Church—"The only Church in Douglas where the poor go."[2] It is interesting to notice that the last verses Brown wrote, some two months before his death, were composed for the guide-book of a bazaar for the building of a new St. Matthew's.

A letter he wrote at the time shows how he was penetrated with affections for the old associations, though they were too distant to be memories:—"I cling to the old place with the fondest affection. I was baptized there; almost all whom I loved and revered were associated with its history."[3]

When Brown was two years old the family removed to Kirk Braddan. The site of the home of Brown's early years can be guessed at by the trees which are still standing—[4]

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[1] *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 85. To S. T. Irwin (January 29th, 1895).

[2] *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 96. To Mrs. Gill (April 3rd, 1895).

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] Parson Drury pulled down the old white Vicarage of Brown's remembrance and built a new one. Brown described the old Vicarage as "just a simple Manx cottage of the most primitive kind." (Lecture on "Old Kirk Braddan." *Isle of Man Examiner*, January 19th, 1895.)

"I wonder if to him the sycamore
Is full of green and tender light;
If the gnarled ash stands stunted at the door,
By salt-blast defrauded of its right;
If budding larches feed the hunger of its sight."[1]

Though Brown constantly mentions flowers, and seems to love them with a marvellous understanding, he never speaks of any but those he saw growing in his father's garden, or of the gorse that crowns the Manx Hills, and of the delicate bog-bean which grows so abundantly in the Manx marshes; whilst he has only dedicated two poems to flowers, and those not to any rare or uncommon blossom, but to the "dainty" bough of May,[2] and to the tall "secluded white Foxglove."[3] Beyond the Vicarage were the fields—the theatre of the potato-picking, the hay-carting, and the corn-cutting described in "Old John."[4] The view from Braddan Vicarage included a strip of sea, and to the south-east Douglas Head formed the frame of Nature's picture. Here in the secluded village the poet, as a child, lived, dreamed, and worked. What secrets Nature disclosed to the shy, imaginative, observant boy! With what deep melancholy the sea filled his soul!

If he was much influenced by his natural sur-

[1] *Poems*, "Braddan Vicarage," p. 3. (Collected Edition.)
[2] *Ibid.*, "I bended unto me," p. 689.
[3] *Ibid.*, "White Foxglove," p. 85.
[4] *Ibid.*, "Old John" pp. 8-9.

roundings, he had another teacher in the person of his father's Scotch gardener.

"You were not of our kin nor of our race,
Old John, nor of our Church, nor of our speech;
Yet what of strength, or truth, or tender grace
I owe, 'twas you that taught me. Born to teach
All nobleness. . . ."[1]

This upright, truth-loving Scotchman had a deep influence on Brown's life, just at the moment when the 'flexile aptness' of his years was most prone to be trained. Old John did more than graft the principles of honesty and truth in his young 'maister'—he indexed for him the book of Nature:—

"A perfect treasury of rustic lore
You were to me, Old John; how nature thrives,
In horse or cow, their points; if less or more
Convex the grunter's spine; the cackling wives
Of Chanticleer how marked; the bird that dives,
And he that gobbles reddening—all the crises
You told, and ventures of their simple lives,
Also their prices."[2]

He also gave him the key of Scott's tales—

"The matchless tales your own great Wizard penned
To us were patent when you gave the key."[3]

His love for the Waverley Novels remained to

[1] *Poems*, "Old John," p. 5. (Complete Edition.)
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 9.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 9.

Brown throughout his life. Writing to Mr. Mozley in 1885, he says—"But the great discovery, or rather re-discovery, has been Scott"; and ten years later, speaking of the *Fortunes of Nigel,* says—"Fancy having that before one still! Fancy dying without having read it!"[1]

Great stress must be laid upon the influence of "Old John," because of its enormous effect on all of Brown's work. In the many-sided character of the old man he found food for some of his highest thoughts.

> "'Twas thus I learned to love the various man,
> Rich-patterned, woven of all generous dyes,
> Like to the tartan of some noble clan,
> Blending the colours that alternate rise.
> So ever 'tis refreshing to mine eyes
> To look beyond convention's flimsy trammel,
> And see the native tints, if anywise,
> Of God's enamel."[2]

To see the "native tints" was one of the main efforts of Brown's life. How well he succeeded we see in a closer reading of his works. How deeply Brown loved this "crabbed" Scotchman is amply shown in a later verse where he speaks of a visit he paid to the homely cottage in which "Old John" lived with his daughter and her husband:—

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[1] *Letters,* vol. ii. p. 122. To Miss N. Brown (September 28th, 1895).

[2] *Poems,* "Old John," p. 10. (Complete Edition.)

"And so we slept; being comrades old and tried,
It was to me a very sacrament,
As you lay hushed and reverent at my side.
Your comely portance filled my soul with pride
To think how human dignity surpasses
The estimate of those who 'can't abide
The lower classes!" [1]

Brown, his sister says, "was shy and timid as a boy, with a shyness that never quite left him; but he none the less lived by choice in the very centre of the family, and could do his lessons sitting with them and joining in their talk."[2] During his childhood he showed no promise of the brilliant wit, vivacity, and geniality which so distinguished him as a man. His great love of music was also of a later growth. "His early education," writes his sister, "was peculiar. My father was a great student, and as he was partially blind he employed my brother constantly in reading to him. He read widely, grave and gay. I can remember him wading through Mosheim's *Church History*, and also reading Byron's poems." With reference to these last, Brown relates an amusing incident. One day the Vicar of Braddan thought he would like his boys to read *Childe Harold*. Brown was sent to Douglas to procure a copy. The bookseller not having one in stock sent back *Don Juan*. In the evening they commenced the reading. They read the first

[1] *Poems*, "Old John," p. 12. (Complete Edition.)
[2] Introductory Memoir to *Letters*, p. 18.

canto! *Don Juan* does not go under false colours for any length of time, so when they had read about two pages the Parson said, "That will do, sir! that will do! That's doggerel!"[1]

The old father's ideas as to reading were very severe: he excluded all novels.

Later, the parish schoolmaster assisted Mr. Brown, senior, in the education of his son; until, at the age of fifteen, he went to King William's College near Castletown, in his native isle.

His childhood was passed in studies under his father's roof and guidance; "in playing with the other children of the village, spending sometimes whole days away from home; and in giving mimetical recitations and repeating poetry to an admiring audience of rustic brethren."[2]

SCHOOL-DAYS (1845-49).

At the age of fifteen Brown was entered at King William's College, and soon attained distinction in the Sixth Form. In 1847 he gained the second prize for a poem, the first being carried off by the late Dean Farrar. It was about this time that he began writing poetry. He tells us that when he was fourteen his father proposed that he should contribute some verses to a book a certain Irish major, living at Castletown, wished

[1] Lecture on "Old Kirk Braddan." *Isle of Man Examiner*, January 19th, 1895.

[2] *Ibid.*

to prepare on the glories of the Duke of Wellington. The major accepted the father's proposal, and Brown wrote some lines. "I wrote verses on the Battle of Vittoria, and I made the stars twinkle and the guitars tinkle."[1] These lines were never published, as the book remained unfinished. Owing to the great kindness of his sister (Mrs. Williamson) we are able to quote some verses from his earliest unpublished efforts—

"The old church bell has a merry sound,
As he swings the churchyard round and round,
And round and round again sings he,
For age can't damp the laughing glee
Of the old church bell.

Right merrily rang the old church bell
When a new-clad soul from heaven fell;
But then was a touch of grief, I know,
In his voice, for 'He comes to a world of woe,'
Thought the old church bell.

He laughed outright when he saw beneath
A bride come up with her bridal wreath,
Full wild and glad was his welcome then,
And hill and vale gave answer again
To the old church bell.

A dark-robed band came up the vale,
And a voice was heard of plaint and wail;

[1] Lecture on "Manx Characters." *Ramsey Courier*, January 21st, 1893.

Then sung he soft and low as they,
Till the very elm-boughs seemed to pray,
Did that old church bell."[1]

The principal of the college at that time was Dr. Dixon, "a deeply religious and serious-minded man of the evangelical school of thought,"[2] of whom Brown always spoke with the sincerest affection.[3] Mr. Irwin gives us the reminiscences of some of Brown's schoolfellows. Archdeacon Gill speaks of him as "emphatically a manly, vigorous boy," but does not remember his taking part in the school games.[4] Dr. Fowler, who was, like Brown, a day-boy, used to walk home with him. As their intimacy matured, they used to take long walks on half-holidays. During these rambles their conversation was about literature, history, politics, theology, and the beautiful Manx scenery that surrounded them.[5] Canon Wilson, though Brown's junior at school, says that "wherever Brown was, there was life at its fullest."[6] The concluding sentence of Archdeacon Gill's reminiscences is worthy of notice—"He had then, as throughout his life, a strong sense of humour, with a keen

[1] For other unpublished poems, *vide* Appendix I.

[2] *Manx Worthies*, by A. W. Moore, p. 109.

[3] Lecture, "Manx Characters." *Ramsey Courier*, January 21st, 1893.

[4] Introductory Memoir, p. 20.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 20-21.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 21.

eye for any little peculiarity of voice or accent or manner, and it is to be feared that his rather indiscreet use of his great power of mimicry sometimes gave offence to those who did not know (as his more intimate friends did) how incapable his kindly, gentle soul was of willingly hurting any one's feelings."[1]

Such, then, was the poet as a boy.

[1] Introductory Memoir, p. 20.

CHAPTER II.

EARLY OXFORD DAYS—FELLOW OF ORIEL.

EARLY OXFORD DAYS (1850-54).

Brown left school in March 1849, and read at home until the following October, when he went up to Oxford. His father had died in 1847, and there seems to have been some question as to the possibility of his going to Oxford. His letters to Archdeacon Moore at this time ask about the societies that help those who need assistance to go to the University, but he is always most careful to provide against any infringement of his mother's claim. Writing to the Archdeacon in 1848, he says—"I cannot long remain dependent upon her; and if I cannot procure by some means or other maintenance at the University, I must enter upon some other employment less congenial to my tastes, but more satisfactory to my finances than literature."[1] Eventually, through the efforts of Archdeacon Moore and the Bishop of St. Asaph (Dr. Short), and the influence of Bishop Shirle, he was admitted, in October 1849, to a servitorship at Christ Church, and went into residence the following January.

[1] *Letters*, vol. i. p. 23. To Archdeacon Moore (November 24th, 1848).

"The opening is made," he writes; "I trust I shall never forget to whom I owe the first application of the wedge."[1]

Mr. Irwin says that he has heard Brown refer to his life as a servitor, over and over again, with a dispassionate bitterness which there was no mistaking.[2] At first he worked too hard until he found his "brain was on fire"; afterwards he was able to devote himself to a more congenial way of living, and even confesses to a "reactionary fit of laziness." For exercise, he rowed. "Rowing," he says, "is a very favourite exercise of mine, and does me good." He also was a great walker, and obtained exercise in going long rambles. "A fortnight ago last Monday, I and another man walked about twenty-six miles."[3]

In November he was elected to a "Boutler scholarship." His first thought was for his mother. "It is my intention still to practise the most rigid economy, . . . and in this way I do not despair of yet enjoying the greatest, perhaps, of earthly blessings, the ability to administer to the wants of those who, near and dear to me, are still in a condition bordering on penury."[4]

In May 1851 he was at the head of the list of

[1] Letter to Archdeacon Moore. Introductory Memoir to the *Letters*, p. 24.

[2] Introductory Memoir to the *Letters*, p. 24.

[3] *Letters*, vol. i. p. 60. To his Mother (March 11th, 1851).

[4] Letter to Archdeacon Moore, quoted by A. W. Moore, in *Manx Worthies*, p. 109.

College examinations, and gained a further exhibition. Two years later he gained a first-class in "Litteris Humanioribus."

Writing to Archdeacon Moore, he says—"I must not be vain, but the examination and its results have been altogether so exciting that I cannot help feeling a little triumphant."[1]

In the following December he was placed in the first-class of the Law and History School. "I am the only First; and thus am entitled to the honour of being the first Double First, as I was among the first Firsts under the new system. . . . Am I justified in recognizing the guidance of Providence in these successes? This last one absolutely places me in the advance of the whole University; for the tutors themselves have said that I occupy the same place relatively to the new system that Sir Robert Peel did to the old."[2]

Notwithstanding his brilliant successes, Dean Gaisford absolutely refused to nominate him to a studentship, though urged to do so by all the resident students (tutors and censors included). Though his position at Christ Church cost him much humiliation, and though the refusal of the famous scholar and excellent dean to nominate him to a studentship made the first night after his Double First the "most intensely miserable" that he was "ever called upon to endure," there were

[1] Letter to Archdeacon Moore, quoted by A. W. Moore, in *Manx Worthies*, p. 110.

[2] *Ibid.*

gleams of happiness in Brown's Oxford life. As, for example, when Dr. Jacobson, Regius Professor of Divinity, congratulated him and gave him a present of books on account of his excellent papers in the Craven Scholarship.

"Yesterday, however, as I was quietly reading in my rooms, tāntărărārā, came on the door, and on my somewhat gruffly (as is my wont) bidding the intruder to come in, in he came, and who should it be but old Jacobson himself, ushered in with profound reverence by an astonished scout. He stayed some time and proved one of the freest, heartiest, and jolliest old fellows I ever met with. . . . He spoke about the examination, and told me that he begged I would accept a present of a book from him as a kind of memorial of the same. 'In course I hadn't no objections,' and shortly after called at his house, where, after some conversation with him in his study (where, by-the-by, he appeared in the graceful *négligé* of shirt-sleeves!) he gave me the book—a copy of Baehr's *Herodotus*, beautifully and strongly bound in calf, gilt, in 4 vols."[1]

Brown also gained relief in going long walks, such as the interesting excursion in the historical Cumnor country that he describes in one of the letters he wrote to his mother.[2] And, above all, he escaped from his lonely and unsympathetic life,

[1] *Letters*, vol. i. p. 58. To his Mother (February 21st, 1851).

[2] *Letters*, vol. i. p. 60. To his Mother (March 11th, 1851).

in music; perhaps at all times the greatest solace he had.

"R. possessed an excellent piano, and was agreeably surprised to find that I was more than a match for him on that instrument. I do not know of anything that gave me more pleasure during the whole Term, than that pleasant ramble over the Keys after my two months' fast."[1]

FELLOW OF ORIEL (1854).

In April 1854 Brown was elected Fellow of Oriel. —"I am delighted to announce the fact of my success at Oriel. On Friday I was elected Fellow along with a man of the name of Pearson.[2] There were two vacancies and eleven competitors; the examination lasted four days. The glory of the thing is, that to gain a Fellowship at Oriel is considered the summit of an Oxford man's ambition. The Fellows of Oriel are the picked men of the University, and this year there happened to be an unusually large number of very distinguished men in."[3]

Bishop Fraser, one of the examiners, long afterwards spoke to one of Brown's friends of his English Essay in the Fellowship examination. In those days an Oriel Fellowship kept and conveyed

[1] Introductory Memoir to the *Letters*, p. 25.

[2] C. H. Pearson, the historian and Australian statesman.

[3] *Letters*, vol. i. p. 66. To his Mother (April 23rd, 1854).

a peculiar distinction; and the brilliant young scholar had at length the ball at his feet.

"This is none of your empty honours," he wrote to his mother; "it gives me an income of about £300 per annum, as long as I choose to reside at Oxford, and about £220 in cash if I reside elsewhere. In addition to this it puts me in a highly commanding position for pupils, so that on the whole I have every reason to expect that (except, perhaps, the first year) I shall make between £500 and £600 per annum. So you see, my dear mother, that your prayers have not been unanswered, and that God will bless the generation of those who humbly strive to serve Him. You are now (it is unnecessary to say), if my life is spared, put out of the reach of all want and, I hope, henceforth need never again give yourself a single anxious thought or care about money matters. . . . I have now gained the very summit of my hopes at Oxford, and hope that I may be able to make good use of my position with a view to my future life. . . . I have not omitted to remark that the election took place on April 21st, the anniversary of your birth and marriage."[1]

The beautiful way in which the first thought of the successful young man was for his mother, shows us a trait in his character which is visible throughout his life.

Brown does state the reason that prompted him to leave Oxford. Dr. Fowler (one of his old

[1] *Letters*, vol. i. p. 66. To his Mother (April 23rd, 1854).

schoolfellows) says that "he never took kindly to the life of an Oxford Fellow," and thinks that his dislike "to lounge about the college and fatten on a Fellowship all his days" is the explanation. This idea is strengthened by a letter he wrote at the time when he took his degree, in which he says — "There is an influence exercised by the life of an Oxford tutor which I cannot help perceiving. I feel it even now working in myself, and I shrink from its baneful consequences."[1]

Whatever his reason, Brown left Oxford after a few terms of private pupils, and returned to his native island.

In 1855 he was ordained deacon by the Bishop of Oxford (Dr. Wilberforce), but did not do any parochial work until 1884, when he was ordained priest by the Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol, and licensed to the curacy of St. Barnabas, Bristol.

[1] Moore's *Manx Worthies*, p. 110.

CHAPTER III.

VICE-PRINCIPAL OF KING WILLIAM'S COLLEGE, ISLE OF MAN—HEAD-MASTER OF THE CRYPT SCHOOL, GLOUCESTER—SECOND MASTER AT CLIFTON COLLEGE.

VICE-PRINCIPAL OF KING WILLIAM'S COLLEGE. (1856-60.)

At Oxford, Gladstone's notice was called to the able young don, and that great statesman offered him political work. Brown, however, refused. Politics did not move him. Here is what he wrote in 1878, in the midst of that agitated time, when the Russian armies were approaching Constantinople and the British fleet was on its way to Besika Bay for the purpose of lessening, or, if possible, annulling the Russian victory.

"*Politics* move me not. There is nothing architectonic in this science, from my point of view. I couldn't help laughing at a passage in Sismondi I happened to be reading when your letter arrived. 'Man is the product of laws and institutions,' and so forth. What absolute rot! The political function does not require genius or any brilliancy even; nay, it is better to have it entirely dissociated from

any such lure. Derby and Carnarvon would steer us through this strait infinitely better if that old virtuoso[1] were not upon the bridge—blow him! We only want a certain material fence drawn round the garden of our life. We can't waste anything very precious or beautiful upon such a vallum. Pitch honest stakes, and let stout ditchers delve. The genius is wanted for other purposes."[2]

Or, again, there is the passage in which his love for scenery is intertwined amusingly—pathetically—with the politics of Ireland and Home Rule. He thus describes what he sees with his eyes and the thoughts that are aroused in his mind:—"I went up Snaefell[3] the other day. On the top we were caught in a great hailstorm; it only lasted about ten minutes, but such blackness! Straight as a bound from Ireland—that was its track. Till then Ireland had been under the thickest veil, but the veil vanished in this deluge, and we saw the Mourne Mountains clear as a crystal, but black as night. A space there was of purest sky, but no sunlight; a space of dark gunpowder tint, from which your sweet old Mother looked forth, the most bewitching, fascinating vixen. Oh, how she hated us! A fixed, eternal, glaring stare of hate and implacable revenge. No, not *us*, poor little kind-hearted goosey-gander Mona, but *you*, *you*

[1] Disraeli.

[2] *Letters*, vol. i. p. 81. To J. R. Mozley (January 6th, 1878).

[3] The highest mountain in the Isle of Man.

English. How the hailstones hissed hate! So it is that night and day, these terrible 'naughty passions' pass over us in transition. We are in the line of fire, and we sometimes try to reconcile you. But what can we do? That day, for instance, we did put up the sweetest little kiss of a rainbow just over Barrule. But Ireland stared fierce and unmitigated; and you, dear old bungling, well-meaning Britishers, looked rather confused and flurried, but in five minutes had recovered the inevitable attitude of perfect self-complacency, and the Pharisee *in excelsis.* But sure you're a noble people, and I allis said so."[1]

In another place he refers to Home Rule, and gives the following solution:—

". . . In fact I would propound to him[2] a constitution—that of the Isle of Man, . . . 24 Keys or Taxiarchi. There are 4 provinces in Ireland, are there not? 24 is divisible by four: $\frac{24}{4}$, *voilà tout!*"[3]

It will be seen from these passages that Brown treats politics in a poetical fashion distinctly his

[1] *Letters*, vol. i. p. 215. To S. T. Irwin (October 9th, 1893).

[2] Parnell.

[3] *Letters*, vol. i. p. 115. To A. M. Worthington (December 30th, 1885).

own. It would almost seem as if he meant the country to be governed by a body of directors, like a railway or other company.

In 1856 he returned to the Isle of Man, and was appointed Vice-Principal of his old school. He speaks of this time "as those days of dawn . . . strangely happy days." As a young master he entered into the enjoyments of the boys, and showed his great love of the sea by taking them out "in the old Custom-house boat of that period in Derby Haven."[1] Canon Wilson, who since his school-days kept up his friendship with Brown, and used to go and stay with him when he was a bachelor master, relates how they used to go sailing into the "Race."[2] Then there were the evenings filled with versatile conversation, humorous stories, and mimetic recitations.

There was, however, another side to Brown's life whilst he was Vice-Principal of King William's College—his public life, in which he tried to help his countrymen. He started and continued a night school at Castletown, to which came "a delightful old dunce" from Derby Haven. This big boy was very much teased by the smarter little imps, but when they got outside "he would give them a hommerin'."[3] But all the "hommerin'" failed to

[1] *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 20. To S. T. Irwin (February 6th, 1894).

[2] Introductory Memoir to the *Letters*, p. 27.

[3] Lecture on "Manx Characters." *Ramsey Courier*, January 28th, 1893.

deter these whipper-snappers from teasing their fellow-scholar at their next meeting.

On leaving King William's College for Gloucester, Brown was presented with a token of appreciation by the members of the night school.[1]

Another of his aims was to improve Manx music. He and his colleague, Mr. Naylor, had an informal sort of roving commission from Bishop Powys to try and improve the singing in the various parishes of the diocese, particularly in the South, near the College.

But this period is especially memorable from the lectures which he found time to deliver in Douglas and Castletown. One of the most famous of these discourses was his lecture on "Raleigh and his Times,"[2] while his dissertation on "Manx Proverbs" has found enduring record in a publication of the Manx Society.

In 1857 Dr. Fowler had the pleasure of making a journey to the Isle of Man for the purpose of marrying his schoolfellow, at the quaint little church of Kirk Maughold, to his cousin, Miss Stowell, the daughter of Dr. Stowell, of Ramsey. What a tender, loving care he had for his wife can only be gathered from his *Letters*.

[1] Letter from "T. Champion" in the *Manx Sun*, November 13th, 1897.

[2] Notice on Brown's death in the *Isle of Man Daily Times*, November 1st, 1897.

HEAD-MASTER OF THE CRYPT SCHOOL, GLOUCESTER (1860-63).

The "Gloucester Episode," as it has been called, has always been passed over by Brown's critics in a most cursory manner, it being regarded as a time hated by him, and so not worthy of record. But is it not a pity that any part of the life of so great a man should be placed on one side without due examination? Even the study of a hated period may serve to illustrate some special characteristic of his temperament. Let us discover the reason of his dislike.

In the early sixteenth century a certain John Cooke, burgess of the city of Gloucester, founded the Crypt Grammar School for the education of "certain poor boys." Seemingly, owing to mismanagement or inability to enter into competition with the Cathedral School, the Crypt School had sunk to the lowest depths of incapacity, and was entirely reformed by the Charity Commissioners. One of the reforms was to appoint a thoroughly competent staff. This they did, nominating Brown as the head-master. The young head, embittered by his life as a servitor at Oxford, intolerant of interference, contemptuous of comment, stooped to the level of his ignorant and pettifogging critics and answered their futile meddling, doing battle with them in the local press. Considering the stamp and quality of his assailants, it is not to be wondered that he wrote to his

mother, saying that "he was gradually becoming very thick-skinned in the presence of annoyances."[1]

His misfortune was that he had to create a tradition, and that the time and material were against him. He had to deal with the sons of a class who despised scholarship and knew nothing of letters. Mr. Henley relates how, when Brown was with him for the last time, he recalled the performance of a youth who—(the head and his assistants had to teach the boys cricket)—being sent out to field, protested to the master in charge in these terms—"Look 'ere, sur, what I wants to know is, when'll it be my turn to *knawk*?"[2] Such was the material. He was, perhaps, impatient as to time, but circumstances were against him.

The chief interest of this time centres in the fact that Mr. W. E. Henley, who gave most of Brown's later work to the world in the *National Observer* and the *New Review*, was his pupil. This fact alone should make the "Gloucester Episode" rank high in the life of the great Manxman.

His letters at this time contain passages showing how he regretted his absence from Manxland. They are full of that longing that made him return to the Isle of Man, when he had "no material interest in the welfare and prosperity of his native island, with few (how few!) intellectual associates there, parting from the friends and ways of life of

[1] Introductory Memoir to the *Letters*, p. 28.

[2] Article, "T. E. Brown," by W. E. Henley, *Pall Mall Magazine*, vol. xxii. p. 425.

thirty years, . . . because it was linked with the tenderest memories of his childhood and the fondest recollections of his youth, because the graves of his kindred were there, and he had heard the mysterious call that comes to a man's heart from the soil that gave him birth."[1]

He speaks of himself as "one of the most patriotic exiles the island can boast";[2] and speaking of the surrounding scenery, always refers back to that of his native isle.

"Then we rambled out of the forest on to a common high up in the hills, where I had the inexpressible delight of lying down on a bed of heather in full bloom (!!!), with harebells and even gorse close by. This was the crowning triumph. —— was 'visibly affected' as I told him; for he loves the Isle of Man and the nature of the scenery. . . . Moreover, I ate some blackberries, but they were poor and flavourless compared with the Manx ones. . . . Your description of the view from Douglas Head makes my mouth water. Glorious indeed it must be now."[3]

So much for the meagre details of his life at Gloucester. Having said that he hated this period, we have said all there is to say. But we must

[1] Tribute of Hall Caine, *Isle of Man Times*, November 6th, 1897.

[2] Introductory Memoir to the *Letters*, p. 28.

[3] *Letters*, vol. i. p. 70. To his Mother (September 21st, 1862).

never forget that, whilst head-master of the Crypt School, he was the means of forming a brilliant man of letters and renowned critic. For these reasons the "Gloucester Episode" is worthy of more attention than it has generally received.

CLIFTON (1863-92).

For nearly thirty years Brown was second master at Clifton College. These years are curiously 'devoid of incident' to the chronologer; but how full of interest to himself and his friends we learn from his *Letters* and the reminiscences of his colleagues.

When Dr Percival was appointed as first head-master of Clifton College, he asked his Rugby colleague, Mr. J. W. Wilson, if he knew of any one to take the modern side. Mr. Wilson writes—

"I named Brown, and he came over[1] to be interviewed. He spent the evening at my lodgings. About half a dozen of us dined there. I warned Brown that he must be on his good behaviour. He did not take my advice. Never was Brown so great. I still remember the Manx songs, with their odd, discordant pianoforte accompaniment and final shriek, the paradoxes, the torrent of fun and talk, and the stories—

> 'Stories, stories, nothing but stories,
> Spinnin' away to the height of your glories.'[2]

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[1] To Rugby.

[2] *Poems*, "The Doctor," p 329. (Complete Edition.)

Percival, I think, was the first to leave, his usual gravity having been completely shattered. Next morning I asked him, not without anxiety, what he thought of Brown. 'Oh, he'll do,' said Percival."[1]

The head-master had another interview with his new assistant; this time at Oxford. Here, Brown's mood was changed; his whole person being acted upon by the different surroundings. In writing of this second interview, Dr. Percival says—"Mr. Wilson having told me about him, I made an appointment to see him in Oxford, and there, as chance would have it, I met him standing at the corner of St Mary's Entry, in a somewhat Johnsonian attitude, four-square, his hands deep in his pockets to keep himself still, and looking decidedly *volcanic*. We very soon came to terms, and I left him there under promise to come to Clifton as my colleague at the beginning of the following Term."[2] So Brown went to Clifton as master of the modern side.

Here we have a strange perversity of destiny: Brown was a Hellenist of the purest water, as he makes evident in the following letter:—

"This is disturbing about Greek, 'Set' Greek. Yes, you would fill the school to overflowing, of course you would, as long as other places did not

[1] Reminiscences of Canon Wilson. Introductory Memoir, p. 28.

[2] Reminiscences of the Bishop of Hereford. Introductory Memoir, p. 30.

abandon the old lines. But it would be detestable treachery to the cause of education, of humanity. To me the *learning* of any blessed thing is a matter of little moment. Greek is not *learned* by nineteen-twentieths of our Public School boys. But it is a baptism into a cult, a faith, not more irrational than other faiths or cults; the Baptism of a regeneration which releases us from I know not what original sign."

This seeming contradiction might lead us to suppose that Brown was but an indifferent or inefficient master on a modern side. The declarations of his pupils, however, belie any such fancy. Though the boys recognized that there were some lessons that did not interest him, the most undistinguished pupils observed his keen interest in history or literature, and spoke of his lessons on these subjects as things they could never forget. To prove this point the words of three of his pupils may be quoted who cannot be ranked among the "undistinguished," but whose testimony is none the less valuable. Mr. Henley, his pupil at Gloucester, speaks thus:—His teaching "opened to me ways of thought and speech that—well! since it came upon me like a call from the world outside—the great, quick, living world—and discovered me the beginnings, the true materials, of myself. . . . The matter of that purpose is that he was T. E. Brown, the man of genius, the first ever seen; and being so, he took hold upon me,

with a grip that he never knew, and led me out into the nearer distances—into the shallows at the edge of the great sea—to a point I might never have reached without him. What he did for me, practically, was to suggest such possibilities in life and character as I had never dreamed."[1]

Mr. Horatio F. Brown, a pupil at Clifton, speaks of his teaching as "the most vivid" he ever received. He, further, says that he shall never forget how in reading Froude's *History* "it was Brown's words, Brown's voice, not the historian's that made me feel the great democratic function which the monasteries performed in England; the view became alive in his mouth." He continues, "I should say that his educational function lay in 'widening.' He was a 'widener.' He made one feel that there was something beyond the school, beyond successful performance at lessons or at games; there was a whiff of the great world brought in by him."[2] One of the author's friends, his pupil during his later days at Clifton, writes much to the same effect, telling how he owed "all his love of Shakespeare and English literature to his teaching, which made the pieces live." This evidence, taken from three different periods of his professional career, shows conclusively that, even if Brown did not like his life as a schoolmaster,

[1] Article, "T. E. Brown," by W. E. Henley, in the *Pall Mall Magazine*, vol. xxii. p. 425.

[2] Reminiscences of an Old Pupil. Introductory Memoir, p. 55.

he had the gift of working through his pupils' imagination and stirring in them the desire to please him.

Though his human sympathies were so wide that some have thought he leaned at times to weakness, he was a very strict master. "That greater laughter was in Brown's whole being; but it was dangerous to scratch him. Scratch the Russian and you are certain of your Tartar, but there was no such certainty in scratching Brown. He might bear down upon you in full canonicals, bewigged, rustling in silken cassock, a full-blown parson of the eighteenth century, or he might advance, threatening birch in hand, a Busby; boys who scratched him invariably found the Busby."[1] His great width, kept in check by the high standard of rectitude which he set himself, was of great value to him as a master in his dealings with his pupils. Though he was grieved that they did wrong, he was not surprised—hardly shocked, perhaps; therefore the boys of his house looked upon him as a friend who understood the enemies they had to fight in their own faults and weaknesses. He helped them through their troubles with a passionate sympathy which it was impossible to mistake as indifference for wrong-doing. It was this peculiar humanity that Brown inherited from his father,[2] this delicacy, that made his house

[1] Article, "Thomas Edward Brown," by J. C. Tarver. *Macmillan's Magazine*, vol. lxxxii. p. 407.

[2] *Vide*, p. 7

so "passionately loyal"; that braced the moral tone of the whole school, and that enabled him, though perhaps unconsciously, "to keep Clifton sweet, to keep pouring into her the greater light of an artistic life."[1] He would be a rash man who would essay to prescribe the point where Brown's influence ended at Clifton. Directly or indirectly he touched every man there, and possibly every boy.

The boys knew him best by his lectures and sermons on Sunday evenings. These were treats looked forward to with eager anticipation by the masters and elder boys, though, perhaps, not fully understood by juniors. "His lectures or addresses —sometimes written, sometimes 'inimitable, brilliant talk'—were equally unforgetable," writes Mr. Irwin.[2] He chose various subjects—sometimes he talked of music, sometimes of literature. Three were on Hooker, Crabbe, and Quarles.[3] Once he related the story of the "Peel Life-boat,"[4] another time he lectured on "Manners." The "element of surprise" was here also in evidence. However carefully prepared his subject, some thought changed his ideas and he left the track he had laid down for himself and gave his listeners some bracing and original remark." Mr. Irwin

[1] Article, "Thomas Edward Brown," by J. C. Tarver. *Macmillan's Magazine*, vol. lxxxii. p. 406.

[2] Introductory Memoir to the *Letters*, p. 32.

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] *Poems*, p. 44. (Complete Edition.)

says—"I shall never forget his inculcating on the school the duty of leading the common life; and how, without emphasis, but with quiet irony, he met the supposed objection that the child of genius could not be fettered by the requirements of a system—'Be content, my friends; he has not come to us yet!'"[1]

Such was Brown to his colleagues and his pupils.

What were his own feelings about his life at Clifton? Was Brown happy there? The scanty documents of the "Gloucester Episode" shows us that his life in that city was extremely irritating to him. Was it simply on account of the class of people with whom he had to deal, or was his profession distasteful to him? May we not say that he chafed at the trammels of his calling, and disliked the forced routine of school-mastering, but was not really unhappy? This seeming paradox is solved by his habit of regarding two simultaneous lives as necessary.

"My plan always was to recognize two lives as necessary—the one the outer *Kapelistic* life of drudgery, the other the inner and cherished life of the spirit. It is true that the one has a tendency to kill the other, but it must not, and you must see that it does not. It's an awfully large order, but we really need three lives—the life of pedagogic activity, as strenuous as you like; the social life nicely arranged, and kept in

[1] Introductory Memoir to the *Letters*, p. 32.

hand, but never regarded as serious; and the intellectual and spiritual life. The pedagogic is needful for bread and butter, also for a certain form of joy; of the inner life you know what I think; the social life is required of us and must be managed."[1]

His life at Clifton was, also, rendered endurable by his fixed resolve to return and end his days amongst the flower-bedecked mountains and perfumed glens of his beloved island. This purpose finds expression in his verses called "Clifton," which contain at the same time his "life steadfastly or normally rebellious against the calling to which circumstances had compelled[2] him, and the joy he obtains in thinking that his island is still beautiful and expectant of his return"—

"I'm here at Clifton, grinding at the mill.
My feet for thrice nine barren years have trod;
But there are rocks and waves at Scarlett still,
And gorse runs riot in Glen Chass—thank God!

Alert, I seek exactitude of rule,
I step, and square my shoulders with the squad;
But there are blaeberries on old Barrule,
And Langness has its heather still—thank God!

There is no silence here: the truculent quack
Insists with acrid shriek my ears to prod,
And, if I stop them, fumes; but there's no lack
Of silence still on Carraghyn—thank God!

[1] *Letters*, vol. i. p. 212. To an Old Cliftonian (September 21st, 1893).

[2] *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 202. To S. T. Irwin (July 2nd, 1893).

Pragmatic fibs surround my soul, and bate it
With measured phrase, that asks the assenting nod;
I rise, and say the bitter thing, and hate it—
But Wordsworth's castle's still at Peel—thank God!

O broken life! O wretched bits of being,
Unrhythmic, patched, the even and the odd!
But Bradda still has lichens worth the seeing,
And thunder in her caves—thank God! thank God!"[1]

How fervently he loved his native island can be gathered from the fact that he never missed spending his holidays, or some part of them, in the land of the little Manx nation, during the whole thirty years that he was master at Clifton.

Nothing remains but to give the scanty chronological details of his Clifton days.

In 1873 "Betsy Lee" was published in *Macmillan's Magazine*. Brown received congratulations from Tennyson and George Eliot.

Mr. Mozley remarks that the year 1873, when the poet was forty-three years old, "may be taken as his flowering time."[2] It was in that year that he published his first poem, and the date coincides with the commencement of a vein of letter-writing absolutely natural and without self-consciousness, yet indicating a brilliant power of observation and highly developed spirit of criticism.

[1] *Poems*, "Clifton," p. 78. (Complete Edition.)

[2] Article, "T. E. Brown," by J. R. Mozley, in *Temple Bar*, vol. cxxiii. p. 505.

Nearly all his published poems were given to the public during the years he was a Clifton master.[1]

We have seen his "pedagogic life" as shown in his professional career; his "inner life" as a poet; we have yet to examine his "social life." This, as we have seen, he regarded as a secondary existence rather than a primary necessity. He was, notwithstanding, "the centre of a literary circle, a spring of moral strength and intellectual vigour," and was sincerely lamented by all those of literary taste on his departure from Clifton.

His family life during these years was saddened by bereavements. First, the death of his boy Braddan, who died of scarlet fever in 1876—

"He died next year;
He died just seven years old,
A very gentle child, yet bold,
Having no fear.
You have seen such?
They are not much?
No . . . No . . .
And yet he was a very righteous child,
Stood up for what was right,
Intolerant of wrong—
Pure azure light
Was cisterned in his eyes;
We thought him wise
Beyond his years—so sweet and mild,
But strong

[1] *Vide* Appendix II.

For justice, doing what he could—
Poor little soul—to make all children good."[1]

A letter he wrote to Mr. Mozley at this time also expresses his grief at the loss of his child—

"I lie down on my child's grave and fill my mouth with the clay and say nothing. If I may quote my own lines—

'Oh, what is there to do?
Oh, what is there to say?'

Nothing—nothing whatever. But then, dear Mozley, do not think that I do not react under the stroke. I am not merely passive. *This is* my action. Death teaches me to *act thus*—to cling with tenfold tenacity to those that remain. . . . *He* is gone; I have no certain ground whatever for expecting that that relation can be renewed. Therefore I am thankful that I actualized it intensely, ardently, and effectually, while it existed; now I will do the same for what is left to me; nay, I will do much more, for I did not *do enough*. He and I might have been more intertwined—a great deal more, and that we were not, appears to me now a great loss."[2]

[1] *Poems*, "Aber Stations," Statio Prima, p. 728. (Complete Edition.)

[2] *Letters*, vol. i. p. 89. To J. R. Mozley (October 24th, 1880).

Turning to his poems, we discover two references to his little boy in the "Clevedon Verses":—

> "Each night when I behold my bed
> So fair outspread,
> And all so soft and sweet—
> O, then above the folded sheet
> His little coffin grows upon mine eye,
> And I would gladly die." [1]

And again, as he gives the touching picture of the uncomprehending grief of his little sister—

> "She knelt upon her brother's grave,
> My little girl of six years old—
> He used to be so good and brave,
> The sweetest lamb of all our fold;
> He used to shout, he used to sing,
> Of all our tribe the little King—
> And so unto the turf her ear she laid
> To hark if still in that dark place he played.
> No sound! no sound!
> Death's silence was profound;
> And horror crept
> Into her aching heart, and Dora wept.
> If this is as it ought to be,
> My God I leave it unto Thee." [2]

In 1886, his brother, Hugh Stowell Brown, the minister of Myrtle Street Chapel, Liverpool, died. Brown always spoke of his brother as a much greater man than himself; describing his sermons,

[1] *Poems*, "Clevedon Verses" III., "Secuturus," p. 660.

[2] *Ibid.*, "Clevedon Verses" II., "Dora," p. 359.

with "the heave, as it were, of terrific power underneath them," as something to remember, and as much finer than anything he knew of. The congregation of Myrtle Street Chapel realized the greatness of their minister, and have erected his statue in front of the building to perpetuate his memory. Like the poet, Mr. H. S. Brown was a brilliant conversationalist, with a tremendous fund of humorous anecdotes; he resembled his brother also in the great love he bore his native land. Lecturing at Douglas in 1895, Brown, speaking of his brother, said—"I hope . . . you will agree with me that so strong, so powerful a man this island has seldom produced, and that he is a man to be placed in the very front rank of distinguished Manxmen."[1]

Death having come to both, the reputation of the elder brother no longer eclipses the real worth of the younger. In the words of Hall Caine, "Manxmen and Manxwomen know to-day that the island has lost the greatest man who was ever born to it, the finest brain, the noblest heart, the largest nature that we can yet call Manx."[2]

Two years later the greatest blow that he was called upon to endure came with the death of his wife. We have a glimpse of his feelings in his letters—" . . . I try to force my poor nervous

[1] Lecture, "Old Kirk Braddan." *Isle of Man Examiner*, January 19th, 1895.

[2] Hall Caine's Tribute. *Isle of Man Times*, November, 6th, 1897.

spirit to take this limitation. But oh, how hard! I try to live and think and feel just *de die in diem*. I try to fence in for each day a sort of cofferdam of exclusion; but the past comes from great depths which are uncontrollable by any engineering of mine, and the future spreads its enormous vacuum."[1]

A letter he wrote some three years later conveys to our minds what this loss continued to be to him. The letter describes how he attended, with Mr. Hall Caine, the evening service in Kirk Maughold Church—the church "where we were married":—

"The whole thing was unparalleled. I read the service. My dear old friend the vicar preached. His voice was sweet and soothing. I don't know what he said, probably it was his very best. I sat within the rails, and saw nothing but one precious thing."[2]

His sorrow found some relief in his fixed and certain hope of reunion with "those loved ones" after death. Writing to a friend who was called upon to endure a similar trouble, he gives further proof of this belief:—

"My dear fellow-sufferer, what is it after all?

[1] *Letters*, vol. i. p. 128. To J. R. Mozley (May 23rd, 1888).

[2] *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 152. To H. G. Dakyns (September 12th, 1891).

Why this sinking of the heart, this fainting, sorrowing of the spirit? There is no separation; life is continuous. All that was stable and good, good and therefore stable, in our union with the loved one is unquestionably permanent, will endure for ever. It cannot be otherwise. Those who marry without love need not concern us. When love has done its full work, has wrought soul into soul so that every fibre has become part of the common life—*quis separabit?* can you conceive yourself as existing at all without *her?*

"No, you can't; well, then, it follows that you don't, and never will. The process of blending has been too complete to admit of separation. This is God's blessing on perfect unions. O Kissack, this is true! But 'the climbing mother' will rise unbidden, and what shall we do? 'Corrigere est nefas': so said poor Horace; there is a clenching of the teeth on these words. Resignation, then, O Flaccus, try that! and indeed he does with his *levius fit patientia.* But resignation to what? Some dark fate with dumb lips and eyes that are inscrutable? No! but to a kind and gracious Father. That is the sum of all. Dear kind friend, as surely as God liveth, we shall be united again to the precious ones in a union that is already begun, and only needs the removal of a very thin barrier or partition to become the rapture of an absolute joy."[1]

[1] *Letters*, vol. i. p. 133. To the Rev E. W. Kissack (August 7th, 1888).

His works contain no poem on the death of his wife but, "A Morning Walk," thrilling as it does with the certainty of the near presence of the departed ones, is probably the outcome of his grief:—

"'Lie there,' I said, 'my Sorrow! lie thou there!
And I will drink the lissome air,
And see if yet the heavens have gained their blue.
Then rose my Sorrow as an aged man,
And stared, as such a one will stare,
A querulous doubt through tears that freshly ran;
Wherefore I said— 'Content! thou shalt go too!'

So went we through the sunlit crocus-glade,
I and my Sorrow, casting shade
On all the innocent things that upward pree,
And coax for smiles: but, as I went, I bowed,
And whispered;—'Be no whit afraid!
He will pass sad and gentle as a cloud—
It is my Sorrow; leave him unto me.'

And every flowerlet in that happy place
Yearned up into the weary face
With pitying love, and held its golden breath,
Regardless seeming he, as though within
Was nothing apt for their sweet grace,
Nor any sense save such as is akin
To charnel glooms and emptiness of death.

Then sung a lusty bird, whose throat was clear
And strong with elemental cheer,
Till very heaven seemed lifted with the joy:

Jet after jet tumultuous music burst
Fount like, and filled the expanding sphere;
Whereat my soul was fain to slake its thirst,
  Intent, and ravished with that blest employ.

The songster ceased;—articulate as a bell
The rippling echoes fell and fell
  Upon the shore of silence. Then I turned
To call my Sorrow—he was not;
But O, what splendour filled the dell!
There! there! O, there! upon the very spot
  Where he had been, an awful glory burned.

It was as though the mouth of God had kissed
And purpled into amethyst
  Wan lips, as though red-quickening ichor rills
Had flushed his heart; 'twas he no more, no more.
'Twas *she*, my soul's evangelist,
My rose, my love, and lovelier than before,
  Dew-nurtured on the far Celestial hills.

'O love,' I cried, 'I come, I come to thee!
Stay! stay!' But softly, silently,
  As pales the moon before the assault of day,
So, spectral-white against the brighter blue
Faded my darling. But with me
Walks never more that shadow. God is true,
  And God was in that bird, believe it as ye may."[1]

Mrs. Brown was buried by the side of her son Braddan, in Redland Green Churchyard, Bristol,

[1] *Poems*, "A Morning Walk," p. 712. (Complete Edition.)

where, by a beautiful decree of Fate, her husband was to be laid to rest nine years later;[1] thus to complete the trinity of family love.

In 1885 he was offered three livings, and though apparently weary of schoolmastering, he decided to remain at Clifton.

"That is certainly good, much better, more masculine, sane, and noble, than our eternal teaching of beggarly elements. Go on, Worthington! no treadmill for you, but a *scala caeli.*"[2]

His holidays were passed in travel. During these years he visited Italy, Switzerland, Ireland, Wales, spending much time at the Lakes and in the towns on the south shore of the Bristol Channel. Nothing need be recorded of these visits save that he has made the Lynton scenery and the Bristol Channel living pictures by his lyric treatment of their beauties, and that he has joined the Lakes to Clifton and the Isle of Man in his musically pathetic "Epistola ad Dakyns."

> "Dakyns, when I am dead
> Three places must by you be visited,
> Three places excellent
> Where you may ponder what I meant,
> And then pass on—
> Three places you must visit when I'm gone.
> Yes, *meant*, not *did*, old friend!
> For neither you nor I shall see the end,

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[1] See page 73.

[2] *Letters*, vol. i. p. 114. To A. M. Worthington (December 30th, 1885).

And do the thing we wanted:
Nathless three places will be haunted
By what of me
The earth and air
Shall spare,
And fire and sea
Let be—
Three places only,
Three places, Dakyns.

I.

The first is by the Avon's side,
Where tall rocks flank the winding tide.

II.

The next is where a hundred fells
Stand round the lake like sentinels,
Where Derwent, like a sleeping beauty,
Girdled with that watchful duty,
At Skiddaw's foot securely lies,
And gives her bosom to the skies.

III.

The next is where God keeps for me
A little island in the sea,
A body for my needs, that so
I may not all unclothed go,
A vital instrument whereby
I still may commune with the sky,
When death has loosed the plaited strands,
And left me feeling for the lands.
Even now between its simple poles
It has the soul of all my souls."[1]

[1] *Poems*, "Epistola ad Dakyns," p. 713. (Complete Edition.)

This poem, considered by many critics as the most poetical of Brown's works, was written in 1869, at the commencement of his Clifton career. It shows that then, as always, the Isle of Man held the chief place in his heart. This fact alone explains his refusal of the livings in 1885, and his resignation of his mastership at Clifton in 1892. He left the college, the scene of nearly thirty years of his labours, on the 2nd of July. He describes his farewell at the Commemoration dinner in the following manner:—

"He[1] discharged his difficult task admirably—a really beautiful speech, conceived in the best taste, the tone sustained throughout. It was highly eulogistic, but I must not say anything about or *against* that. They 'drowned me in a bowl'—*i.e.*, presented me with a silver vessel, in which you could baptize a baby by immersion."[2]

So Clifton lost a man whose uplifting, wholesome, and vigorous influence did more for the school than all the university honours gained during his stay. Vain would be the guess that defined the limits of his influence in England of to-day! Thus, he left his friends, colleagues, and home of more than a quarter of a century to return to his native land, because he loved it.

[1] Rev. M. Glazebrook, the headmaster.

[2] *Letters*, vol. i. p. 155. To J. R. Mozley (June 27th, 1892).

CHAPTER IV.

LAST YEARS IN THE ISLE OF MAN. (1892-97.)

BROWN AS A CRITIC—BROWN AS A LECTURER—HIS LETTERS — BROWN AS A MUSICIAN — HIS LAST DAYS.

BROWN did not remain a stranger for any length of time to the people he loved best. His countrymen were only too glad to welcome "Tom Brown," as he was called by rich and poor alike. They, at any rate, recognized, in some measure, his greatness, and welcomed their hero with open arms. In writing of a Sunday evening when he preached at Kirk Maughold Harvest Festival, he says—"The church bursting with fire and bright faces; entering at the west door, it looked like a tunnel of flame. The churchyard, too, was full, a curiously eager 'company of witnesses' glowering in upon me."[1]

The reason he gave for refusing the Archdeanery of Man,[2] when offered him by Mr. Asquith, then Home Secretary, gives the key-note of these last five years in the island. This is what he writes:—

[1] In 1894.

[2] *Letters*, vol. i. p. 161. To H. G. Dakyns (November 5th, 1892).

"I seek no preferment anywhere, certainly not in the Isle of Man. At some cost I have purchased my freedom, and will not lightly part with it. It is a case of 'From Egypt's bondage come.'

"A few years will finish the business, and I must be free—free to do what I like, say what I like, write what I like, within the limits prescribed for me by my own sense of what is seemly and fitting. Literature is my calling, and that in the most liberal interpretation, ranging from *Die hohe Kritik* to such lucubrations as 'The Gel of Ballasallaw.' With this view, I need absolute freedom. . . . If from this freedom there should proceed anything whereby my native island may profit, either by way of self-realization or harmless mirth, *apponam lucro*. . . . Every man should follow the bent of his nature in art and letters, always provided that 'he does not offend against the rules of morality and good taste.' But an archdeacon must submit to other and more cramping restraints. Good taste alone would cancel half my writings as the production of an ecclesiastical dignitary."[1]

It was not that Brown regarded the offer in any contemptuous way. Another of his letters shows that he held it in very high esteem:—

"I don't 'scorn' the Archdeanery. The function

[1] *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 68. To A. W. Moore (November 6th 1894).

is something more than archidiaconal. It is legislative, the Archdeacon of Man being *ex officio* a member of the Council. Moreover (and this is symptomatic), the Governor communicated to me through a friend the fact that my appointment would be *very acceptable to him*, and that expressly with a view to my duly weighing the considerations bearing on the matter. This was, I think, very kind, but my mind is made up, and has been from the first."[1]

His life of freedom was devoted to helping his fellow-clergymen, to lecturing, and to that pursuit most congenial to him—literature.

After the publication, in 1893, of the volume named from its first poem, "Old John," which its author is proud to say does "not contain a single line of translation,"[2] Brown only wrote two poems of any considerable length: the one being "Roman Women," which appeared in the August number of the *New Review* for 1895; the other, "Job the White," which was printed in the same publication in the December of that year.

During these last five years he chiefly confined his literary efforts to critical and philosophical essays.[3]

[1] *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 72. To S. T. Irwin (November 21st, 1894).

[2] *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 170. To S. T. Irwin (January 29th, 1893).

[3] See Appendix II.

BROWN AS A CRITIC.

As a critic, Brown only wrote when he had something to say, consequently his criticisms are refreshingly bright, and are rendered convincing by his terse, appropriate language. Some passages from his criticism of Hall Caine's great novel, *The Manxman*, will serve to show Brown's method of dealing with his subject:—

"But here, in *The Manxman*, Mr. Caine has no doubts, no tremulous, asymptotic approaches. He embraces his theme with all the fiery energy of his soul, and we follow him with confidence. . . . He that does not recognize the quality in the passion of Kate Cregeen either uses an imperfect instrument or is himself a blind microscopist. At these elevations ethical blindness is not uncommon, and the sufferer is generally unconscious of his defect. Not the less is he æsthetically incapable. The passion of so highly strained a creature as Kate, a creature so immediate, so elemental, may well be used as a test to ascertain the degree of delicacy in which the reader possesses the sense of moral vision. And this consideration is one which we recommend to all those who may have been alarmed by what has been called, especially in the Isle of Man, the coarseness of the *Manxman*."[1]

[1] Article, "Manx Life and Manxland." *Contemporary Review*, vol. lxvi. p. 643.

This extract brings before us the vivid manner in which Brown hit the main and underlying beauties or defects in a work. The same thing is to be noticed in the short literose judgments he gives in some of his letters. Take his remarks on Flaubert, of whom he said, "to understand, was to understand the most intensely un-English spirit that ever breathed"[1]:—

"After all, do you think *Bouvard et Pécuchet* was his centre of gravity? I fancy it was a marvellously happy tentamen in a new direction, but I must consider the Bovary and the *L'éducation sentimentale* the essential Flaubert. Casting about for the adequate expression, he made two great dives which were not in the line of his proper motion. One was *Salammbô* and the other *Bouvard et Pécuchet.* They are both magnificent, both quite at right-angles to the true Flaubert who walks on in the absolutely real life of the Bovary. He amazes one with his *Bouvard et Pécuchet.* It is as if a dying man suddenly started up a convulsive athlete, a buffoon of the first rank, and he says, 'There! I can do *that* too! You didn't expect it! No?' and a shrug and a shiver, and he falls dead."[2]

Or as Brown appears in a fighting humour in his remarks on *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*:—

[1] *Letters*, vol. i. p. 219. To J. C. Tarver (October 24th, 1893).
[2] *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 26. To J. C. Tarver (February 18th, 1894).

"I have finished *Tess*. It is very unsatisfactory. The last part, the part after Clare's return, is intolerable. It is also weak, just as if Hardy had been very unwell, yet forced by the serial method of publication to produce 'copy.' One observes this in the languor of the story, combined with the cantharadine grip, or rather gripping, of an occasional effort. The original impulse dies, but makes a few desperate, ineffectual kicks. Such are the Stonehenge business, and the 'black flag.' Fancy grasping at Stonehenge to heighten a situation! And how badly it is done! It was surely going out of the way to drag in the blessed old thing at all. But, when he was about it, he ought to have made a better use of the machine. Unquestionably he had an attack of influenza just at that point. I resent it enormously. A man must be either miserably out of sorts, or fearfully hard up for sensational colour, to make a snatch at Salisbury Plain. It is just like 'rouge,' and that, too, upon a moribund face, for the story has already shown every symptom of approaching death. The 'black flag'! Cheap, though creepy. What an end! And do you think Clare and Liza-Lu are even respectable as they crawl away—hand-in-hand, it is true, but yoked in a dismal fellowship, inevitably suggested by the expressed wish of Tess that they should marry? Notice, too, the vague treatment of Liza-Lu's person. I take Liza-Lu to be a sort of giant succubus—or succuba would it be?—an *ébauche* of God knows

what. And these two are to continue the business. Liza-Lu is to be all that Tess ought to have been. This is the most commonplace of expedients, and never can satisfy. Liza-Lu, indeed, conceived of by me as a compound of Undine, Caddy Jellyby, and a possible Doll Tearsheet! And then how abominable is the later Tess! Her first fall was nothing. But the second—what! that fellow! the chap that she had seen as Methodist preacher! Incredible! She couldn't. No woman could. How you detest her! Of course you do, for she is simply monstrous —a portent. And yet you liked her. Certainly I did, but not now—this is ruin indeed. Clare had told her to have recourse to his father in case of extremity. The author has slipped that in lest we should feel Clare to be guilty of criminal neglect. But he failed to perceive how terribly it aggravated the guilt of Tess. Had Tess pride? Pride! What! And this pride threw her into the arms (shall we call them arms?) of the hydra D'Urberville! And this is the Tess we knew. The fact is, Hardy doesn't know his people, and, for the sake of sensational effect, he will take one of his own sweet countrywomen and drag her through all this impossible and inconsistent dirt. Don't tell me that this is the aim of a true artist. Where is your πάθος? Where is your κάθαρσις? You can't eat your cake and have your cake. The Tess of the later part is not the Tess of the earlier. You surely must have some kind of identity in order to maintain the most otiose

interest in the victim. But she is gone, vanished like Iphigenia from among the flames. Something has been left behind, substituted for her; but not a deer of Dian's herd—good gracious, no! a mask of unutterable fæces and the fiend."[1]

What a difference we find to this rending, tearing, and trampling when we turn to his eulogy of *Weir of Hermiston*—

"It is Louis Stevenson's last and greatest, though unfinished work. A veritable masterpiece. It doesn't exactly take one's breath away, as Rudyard Kipling did when I first read his *Barrack-room Ballads*, but it fills one with a steady glow. You'll not cry over it, as we may all be well excused for crying over Ian Maclaren. But the great men go beyond tears. I don't mean that Stevenson does quite this. One thing he does: he treads the heights above the watershed of the facile and obvious lachrymose. You don't want your pocket-handkerchief; your heart is full, but not exactly *that* way."[2]

The best specimens of Brown's critical work are, however, to be found in the essays he wrote for the *New Review*. His "causerie" on Sir Philip

[1] *Letters*, vol. i. p. 207. To S. T. Irwin (August 17th, 1893).

[2] *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 185. To Rev. J. Quine (November 29th, 1896).

Sydney[1] is eminently characteristic of its author. Brown says—"Sydney belonged to the first and best flight of the Euphuists. In him we see the very type and pattern of the school while it was yet devoted to the genuine cultivation of beauty and grace." He continues with a quotation from Sydney's old-world poetry; and urges the present generation, in these words, to turn aside a moment and study this courtly master—"You don't like this! you might do worse than listen to a little more of it for the nonce. For my part, it does one good to slip quietly down these waters, between banks of old-world flowers."

But Brown is no sentimentalist, and tells with keen delight of another trait in his hero; how, though he was "courteous and tranquil," it would have been madness to rely implicitly on that sweet flexibility. He quotes from the letter Sydney wrote to his father's secretary—"Mr. Molyneux." He writes—"if I ever hear that you have read one of my letters without my consent or my father's order, I'll stick my dagger in your carcase, and make up yourself to do it, for I am serious." Brown's remark "*Serious!* I should think so" summarizes the many-sided view that the poet took of his subject.

Brown's review of Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*[2] is another example of his scathing contempt. In a concise passage he ridicules Burton's learned

[1] *New Review*, vol. xii. p. 415 (1895).

[2] *Ibid.*, September 1895.

folly and false sentiment. "I question," he writes, "whether his talk was always very wholesome, rather acrid I should think, and negative: luculent, but not in the sense." Not content with exposing the morbid nature of Burton's ideas, he criticizes his writing—"Ego is sure you will be interested. That is the egotism of Burton." The criticism is incisive, the result of his deep reading and critical faculty.

His avowed object in writing on Spenser[1] is to "convert people" back to that poet. Trenchant in his criticism, he is truly appreciative. Not hesitating to say that the *Faerie Queene* is far too long for an allegory, he praises with delicate insight Spenser's Hymns of Love and Beauty. "Platonic hymns, but so misunderstood by two noble ladies that, to satisfy them, he wrote two more, in which," says Brown, "he shows himself an excellent Christian, one might almost say a very creditable Puritan, but decidedly not a poet. The first and second are nearly the best things that ever came from his pen; the two made to order are mechanical, lifeless Stiggens, or at the most the Rev. Charles Honeyman." His criticism of Spenser's writings takes the form of an unqualified praise. He describes them as the "quintessence of consummate purity—statuesque, poetic sculpture." His essay is not likely to achieve its aim, but it is an able appreciation of beauty and truth.

His remarks on the *Orlando Furioso*, written

[1] *New Review*, vol. xvi. p. 393 (1897).

some time earlier, are a very good example of the poetical way in which he regarded books:—

"Have you read it? It is just now my constant companion. What a brilliant bird-of-paradise sort of a creature it is! I think the hard enamel of this Italian reprobate pleases me better than Spenser with his soft velvet carpet, on which you walk ankle-deep in the moss-yielding allegory."[1]

No survey of Brown as a critic would be complete without the inclusion of his sonnet on "Boccaccio"—

"Boccaccio, for you laughed all the laughs that are—
The Cynic scoff, the chuckle of the churl,
The laugh that ripples over reefs of pearl,
The broad, the sly, the hugely jocular;
Men call you lewd, and coarse, allege you mar
The music that, withdrawn your ribald skirl,
Were sweet as note of mavis or of merle—
Wherefore they frown, and rate you at the bar.
One thing is proved: to count the sad degrees
Upon the Plague's dim dial, catch the tone
Of a great death that lies upon a land,
Feel nature's ties, yet hold with steadfast hand
The diamond, you are three that stand alone—
You and Lucretius and Thucydides."[2]

Still better is his imperishable quatrain on "Dante and Ariosto," in which he paints the awful splendour of the monotonous calm of the enormously

[1] *Letters*, vol. i. p. 104. To J. R. Mozley (about 1883).
[2] *Poems*, "Boccaccio," p. 92. (Complete Edition.)

strong Florentine poet, and the charm of the disdainful daintiness of the writer of Modena—

> "If Dante breathes on me his awful breath,
> I rise and go; but I am sad as death—
> I go; but turning, who is that I see?
> I whisper:—'Ariosto, wait for me'!"[1]

BROWN AS A LECTURER.

Besides helping his fellow-clergy and writing, his time was also devoted to lecturing. "If only a handful of his countrymen called to him, he came at their bidding. He was at everybody's service, everybody's command. Distance was as nothing, even to his failing strength; time as nothing, labour as nothing, and the penalties he paid did not count."[2] Besides the many causeries that he made at the Douglas Debating Society and elsewhere, he delivered six principal lectures:—

On "Manx Celebrities," in the Centenary Hall, at Peel, on January 12th, 1893.

On "Manx Idioms," in the Working Men's Institute, at Laxey, September 1893.

On "Manx Characters," in the Centenary Hall, under the auspices of the Peel Cricket Club, on January 4th, 1894.

On "Old Kirk Braddan," in the Grand Theatre, Douglas, on January 10th, 1895.

[1] *Poems*, "Dante and Ariosto," p. 92. (Complete Edition.)

[2] Hall Caine's Tribute. *Isle of Man Times*, November 6th, 1897.

On "Old Kirk Braddan and Parson Drury,"—in aid of St. Matthew's New Church Fund—in the Grand Theatre, Douglas, on April 4th, 1895.

On "Manx Idioms," before the Castletown Literary and Philosophical Society, on April 28th, 1897.

What Brown was as a lecturer cannot be gathered from reading his speeches, though that gives one an idea of the fund of humour and amusing anecdotes that besprinkled his lectures. It was the man himself speaking from his heart; his change of voice, the constant uncertainty, his facial expression, his heartrending pathos and lifesome mimicry that told.

"My lecture at Douglas, on 'Old Kirk Braddan,' was a failure. . . . The fact is, that the people were too indulgent, stimulated me to unstinted mimicry—buffoonery—what you will. And they laughed and laughed, till with horror I awoke to the consciousness that I was treating the old Braddan life as a school of comedy, of which my father constituted the central figure and protagonist. Some tender things I believe I said, but the subjective condition of my hearers, aggravated by my own impudence, carried everything into a *βάραθρον* of farce."[1]

Such an account makes one understand that Brown was worthy of the encomium the writer of his obituary notice in the London *Times* paid him

[1] *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 84. To S. T. Irwin (January 29th, 1895).

when he wrote—"The writer of this note has heard the most brilliant lecturers from Faraday downwards, but he could put none in the same rank with Brown."[1] Besides lecturing, he also gave readings from his *Poems*, which were very highly appreciated by all those who had the possibility of hearing them.

HIS LETTERS.

The greater part of his published letters were written during his last years in the Isle of Man. These volumes—which, by their very dissimilarity, ought to find a place beside the correspondence of Gray, Cowper, Byron, Lamb, and Fitzgerald—are a novelty in the ranks of epistolary literature. If we find in them an allusiveness that recalls Lamb to our minds, we quickly discover that our first thought has deceived us—that it is not Lamb's allusiveness but Brown's. Whilst the carelessness which forms the charm of Fitzgerald is no less absent. In reading Brown's letters, differing from all others as he was different from all other men, we are struck at once by the comparison of contrasts that might be drawn between his own letters and those of Edward Fitzgerald.

Brown was a Celt, feeling intensely, passionately impregnated with the love of nature, and overflowing with delicate fancy. Fitzgerald was an Englishman of a much colder and sterner character; he

[1] Obituary Notice on Rev. T. E. Brown, London *Times*, November 1st, 1897. Written by Canon Wilson.

sought rather the delicate blends of ordinary ideas than the discovery of new fancies. Brown had found the key to all the mysteries in his optimistic, buoyant hope; Fitzgerald still searched in an idyllic state of melancholy. Fitzgerald never did, nor ever could have loved mankind with the fervent passion that caused Brown to pour sunshine on rich and poor alike. Brown's whimsical humour, which has been so happily termed "wit hand-in-hand with love," finds no reflection in the letters of Fitzgerald.

BROWN AS A MUSICIAN.

In 1894 Brown went to the Wagner Festival at Bayreuth, "a much-looked-forward-to pilgrimage," which resulted in his being partly disenchanted by "the great enchanter, or the great imposer—which?"[1]

He writes, after having heard *Parsifal*, "Won't do! *Parsifal* is an impossibility, and I am hugely disappointed."[2]

Brown's method of musical criticism, in which the seemingly "far-fetched" fancies of the poet convey an impression far more adequate than the usual attempt to describe the indescribable by a mere catalogue of superlatives, is strikingly illustrated in a letter he wrote to Mr. Oakley, describing a Crystal Palace Concert:—". . . I have said

[1] *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 51. To S. T. Irwin (August 7th, 1894).

[2] Introductory Memoir, p. 52.

nothing about the choral *annexe* to the ninth symphony. No circumstances could be more unfavourable to a choir. When your ears have been stung for upwards of an hour by the most delicious string poison, 'the human voice divine' is simply grotesque. There is one passage where the tenors lead off. Well, it sounded almost like a poor melancholy laugh, as of idiots. . . . Then, you remember, a chorus takes off suddenly, and leaves a quartet exposed in midfield. This is a most exquisite machine, to my mind. It is as if a thunderstorm suddenly cleared away, and four stars shone out in a sweet quaternion of solitude. It ought to be that. A calm, soft kiss on the forehead of retreating turbulence."[1] Or in the eight lines in which he criticizes the "Love Melody" of Bach:—[2]

"Chance-child of some lone sorrow on the hills
Bach finds a babe; instant the great heart fills
With love of that fair innocence,
Conveys it thence,
Clothes it with all divinest harmonies,
Gives it sure foot to tread the dim degrees
Of Pilate's stair,—Hush! hush! its last sweet breath
Wails far along the passages of death."[3]

Brown never desired to trace "meanings" in instrumental music; and though he translated some of Schumann's songs, he considered the so-

[1] Introductory Memoir, p. 49.

[2] No. 27, vol. 5, Bach's *Organ Works*.

[3] *Poems*, p. 93, Introductory Memoir, p. 46.

called setting as distinctly the predominant part.[1] All his life Brown did what he could to "widen" musical taste—from the time when he sang in the village choir,[2] continuing in his efforts in improving the singing in the south of the island,[3] through his stay at Clifton, where he was responsible for several hymns in the School Hymn Book, until his last years in the island, when he composed and sang popular songs to try and counteract the music-hall ditties that had invaded the "silly rustics."[4]

His letters indicate what a solace music was to him, and how it permeated his entire being is evident in the rhythm and setting of his poems.

HIS LAST DAYS.

On September 23rd, 1897, he wrote to his friend Mr. Worthington:—"I believe I am coming to England on October 1st. Such has been the motive power of Clifton friends—partly they urged, partly they demonstrated to me my renewed energies. Brief I come. First, it will be Wales, however, to October 4th—Tannyralt, near Abergele, with my grand-niece; then to Clifton."[5]

The letter he wrote to Mr. Dakyns on October

[1] Introductory Memoir to the *Letters*, p. 47.

[2] Lecture, "Old Kirk Braddan." *Isle of Man Times*, April 6th, 1895.

[3] See page 31.

[4] *Letters*, vol. ii. pp. 14, 45, 115.

[5] *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 227. September 23rd, 1897.

27th—probably the last letter he wrote to any one—tells how he had carried out his plans:—

"Sure enough here[1] I am, and you are right entirely. I left the island on October 1st, and I shall be leaving here on Saturday, October 30th, for Liverpool. Then I hope to see my nephew and his family, and go to hibernation. Stayed first with the Wollastons for ten days, then withdrew to Cardiff, where I put up at my sister's for another ten days. Went to Dean Vaughan's funeral, and called upon our old Clifton Vaughan. Then I came back to Clifton on Monday last."[2]

During his stay at Cardiff he seemed as "bright and intellectually vigorous" as ever.[3] On several occasions he went for long walks with his brother-in-law, visiting, among other places, Llandaff and Penarth. During these ten days he spent one or two evenings reading and criticizing his letters to his mother and sister, which were in the possession of Mrs. Williamson. On Monday, October 25th, he returned to Clifton. On Wednesday evening he went to a Richter Concert, which he enjoyed very much. On Thursday he dined with Mr. Irwin, and "seemed his usual bright self."[4] He was staying

[1] Clifton.

[2] *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 230. To H. G. Dakyns (October 27th, 1897).

[3] Article, "His Last Days," by Rev. J. Williamson. *Isle of Man Times*, November 6th, 1897.

[4] Note on page 231 of vol. ii. of the *Letters*.

with Mr. Tait, and on Friday evening he gave an address to the boys of his House. "For some minutes he spoke vigorously, when his voice suddenly became thick, and he seemed to sway and would have fallen had not assistance been promptly rendered. He was carried to his bedroom, but never recovered consciousness, and died peacefully at ten minutes past eleven—one hour and a half after his seizure. The cause of his death was hemorrhage on the brain, due to the bursting of a blood-vessel."[1] He was buried on the following Wednesday—November 3rd—in Redland Green Churchyard, by the side of his wife and son. The first part of the service was taken in the Clifton College Chapel by the Bishop of Hereford, Archdeacon Wilson (formerly Head-masters of Clifton), and the Rev. M. M. Glazebrook, then head of the College.

Thus, peacefully surrounded by those amongst whom the greater part of his life had been spent, died one whose many-sided sympathy made it possible for each one of his friends to say—"No one knew him as I did."[2]

We who never saw his sturdy figure, his extraordinarily mobile face, his bushy grey eyebrows, his deep blue eyes, at once deeply and radiantly human, and his broad mouth made for hearty, natural laughter; we who never heard his full,

[1] Telegram to the *Isle of Man Times*, from the Headmaster of Clifton College.

[2] Introductory Memoir to the *Letters*, p. 44.

tender, resonant voice, who never listened to his entrancing conversation, changing from the "gravest grave to the gayest gay" by a whimsical transition, conduced by some passing fancy, and introduced by a subtle accent that prepared his hearers for the change and bound his conversation into a continuous whole—we have lost more than words can express; but, as Hall Caine writes, we can still depict "the bright and brilliant soul, so strong, so true, so humorous, so tender, so easily touched to sympathy, so gloriously gifted, so beautifully unselfish,"[1] in his *Letters* and *Poems*.

[1] Hall Caine's Tribute. *Isle of Man Times*, November 6th, 1897.

CHAPTER V.

THE ISLE OF MAN: ITS HISTORY—BROWN'S AIM.

THE Isle of Man is not of any considerable size; and grander, more magnificent, and more massive scenery could easily be found. But it would be difficult to discover anything more beautiful than the home of "Mona's miniature sovereignty."

"All islands have an especial charm when seen from the sea, but I know of nothing more lovely than the Isle of Man, when you approach it from the English side, towards the fall of night."[1]

The sun gradually sinking behind its mountains, leaves the land in silhouette on the blue horizon, like a rain cloud on a summer sky. As you approach, the land takes shape, and the sun sinks from sight, leaving the whole island in a purple haze. Closer still, and you can distinguish the spires and domes of Douglas, the outline of its bay and the crowd of people and carriages that move in a constant stream on its promenade. The coast line is fine; the Manx rivers, which are still unpolluted, are lovely, flashing, sparkling streams, merry in their island patriotism; the

[1] *The Little Man Island*, p. 2, by Hall Caine.

mountains, though not so tall or majestic as many others, are a perfect sight, especially when the gorse in flower crowns them with a golden coronet. Though the coast is fine, the rivers enlivening, the mountains soul-satisfying, the curraghs a dream of untrained nature, none of these can compare with the Manx glens in their soft sweetness and exquisite beauty. This is how the tourist sees the island;—these are the things any one can perceive. To the Manxman there is a mine of hidden beauties that come at his call. The whole island quivers and trembles with stories, "that are like leaves on a tree in their abundance."[1]

Brown had the "vision" so memorably described by Dean Swift as "the power of seeing the invisible." He saw the Manx peasant in a way impossible to the countless tourists who flock to the island in the summer months. He stamped upon Barrule or Sulby, and at once the whole scene teemed with life, the dry bones came together, and stood on their feet an exceeding great army.

Brown had faith in humanity, and his reward was the "Yarns" which we have now before us in all their freshness of revelation. For he has revealed the Manx people in their changing character, to themselves and to the world. He has done this simply by being T. E. Brown—that is, Brown inherited qualities forming an emotional character,

[1] *Letters*, vol. i. p. 123. To A. M. Worthington (October 18th, 1886).

guided by a heart that is sound, full, and deep. The whole is ruled by a powerful intellect of no time and place—dramatic, synthetic, and eminently productive.

The Manx nation retains its own ancient laws and institutions; its own language, which, though dying, is still vigorous in its picturesque dialect that has its origin in Celtic sources, and in long separation from the adjacent countries.

It is now certain that the Isle of Man was known to the Romans, though not by the name of Mona; which was the Latin appellation of Anglesea. In the sixth century Celtic kings ruled the island. In the ninth, the Norwegians conquered it, under their notorious leader Harold Haarfager. The tenth century saw the Danish churl Orry elected king. He is supposed to be the originator of the present constitution. His descendants reigned until 1077 A.D., over the Kingdom of the Isles, which included with the Isle of Man the Hebrides. After this the dynasty again changed, and the island was once again governed by the Norwegians; who were afterwards defeated by the Scots. In 1263 A.D., Magnus, King of Norway, gave up the island to Alexander III. of Scotland. On his death, in 1285, King Edward I. of England took possession of the island. The English kings used the island as a reward for their favourites, giving it to any one they wished to recompense. In 1406 A.D., Sir John Stanley received it in perpetuity for the strange condition of rendering two falcons to the

English king on his coronation. The Stanley family ruled the island variously under the title of king or lord until 1735 A.D., when James, the tenth Earl of Derby, died without heirs. The island, having become a centre of smuggling, was in 1765 bought by the English Government, leaving to the Dukes of Athol certain rights, which were finally acquired in 1828.

The island is now a dominion of the Crown of England, ruled by a Governor appointed by the Crown; a Council, which acts as an upper chamber of the Legislature; and the House of Keys—one of the most ancient legislative assemblies in the world. This is the representative assembly. These three form the Court of Tynwald. The laws, which are promulgated on Tynwald Hill, in English and Manx, have to receive the approval of the King of England. The island has no representative in the British Parliament, and no laws passed by it affect the island, except special provision is made therein. Until 1866 A.D., the members of the House of Keys were chosen by co-option,[1] but since that date they have been elected by popular vote. Women have had the right to vote since 1880.

For the purposes of civil jurisdiction, the island is divided into a northern and southern district, and each of these is subdivided into three "sheadings," which are analogous to counties. Until

[1] *Poems*, "Kitty of the Sherragh Vane," p. 489. (Complete Edition.) *Vide* p. 113.

the fifteenth century, the Deemsters or judges of the island (supposed by some to be the successors of the Druidical priests) acted according to unwritten laws, called "Breast Laws," of which they were the depositaries.

The name of the island is derived from the word "Manannan"—the name of a god who, according to Gaelic mythology, was able to cover himself with fog when he wished to become invisible. This legend cannot have any reference to the climate, which is usually very clear, dry, and bracing; but it has found its fulfilment in the mist in which the people of Man have so long remained hidden. T. E. Brown has now pierced it, and revealed this unique people to the world.

When one realizes that the early Kings of Man were Norwegian, and perhaps landed at Peel, Brown's poem, "The Peel Life-boat," has an entirely new interest for us. As a poem it is beautiful, but viewed from a Manxman's point of view it is a masterpiece. What emotion, what inexpressive fulness of heart must the Manxman experience when he reads—

> "Of Charley Cain, the cox,
> And the thunder of the rocks,
> And the ship *St. George*—
> How he balked the sea-wolf's gorge
> Of its prey—
> Southward bound from Norraway."[1]

[1] *Poems*, "The Peel Life-boat," p. 44. (Complete Edition.)

How he must feel the call of kindred blood as he reads the splendid rescue! It is like grasping hands with the past, across the space of a thousand years.

The Norwegian Government felt the touch of great things in the incident, and sent medals for Charlie and his crew, that were distributed to them by the Governor inside the roofless walls of the Castle of the Black Dog.[1]

Brown's poems naturally fall into two divisions —Manx and English. He does not write the original Manx language, which is a sub-dialect of the ancient Celtic, and is now fast becoming extinct; but in Anglo-Manx — the English that a Manxman talks. When once the few unknown words are learned, this dialect presents no difficulties, but rather enhances the pleasure of the reader.

What was Brown's reason for writing the "Fo'c's'le Yarns"? In 1881 he writes—

> "To sing a song shall please my countrymen;
> To unlock the treasures of the island heart;
> With loving feet to trace each hill and glen,
> And find the ore that is not for the mart
> Of commerce: this is all I ask."[2]

His aim, clearly, was to please his countrymen in discovering and revealing to them the hidden beauties of their land. Six years later his aim had

[1] *The Little Man Island*, by Hall Cain, p. 38.

[2] *Poems:* Dedication, First Series "Fo'c's'le Yarns," p. 107.

changed to a graver tone. He had begun to realize how all the traditions of the Manx nation were changing, and would be lost unless some one could preserve them, to serve as a guide to future generations.

"Dear countrymen, whate'er is left to us
Of ancient heritage—
Of manners, speech, of humours, polity,
The limited horizon of our stage—
Old love, hope, fear,
All this I fain would fix upon the page;
That so the coming age,
Lost in the Empire's mass,
Yet haply longing for their father, here
May see, as in a glass,
What they held dear—
May say, 'Twas thus and thus
They lived'; and, as the time-flood onward rolls,
Secure an anchor for their Celtic souls."[1]

His aim is only to portray the past to his countrymen—the outside world did not enter into his mind. It was for this reason that he wrote in dialect—

"Nathless, for mine own people do I sing
And use the old familiar speech!"[2]

To him, the value of his poems rested entirely on their reflection of the past. "The thought that

[1] *Poems:* Dedication, Second Series "Fo'c's'le Yarns," p. 328.

[2] *Ibid.*, First Series, p. 107.

troubled me was this: who is to perpetuate the traditions? They must go with me. The whole business will be a perfect blank, not only tribal traditions, but family. . . . We live vigorously in the living present, and extract the gold from the current years, being amply satisfied with contemporary relations. I alone have tried to build a cairn of memories in my books."[1]

But he always looked to a person yet unborn. His work was merely to collect materials for a poet greater than he, who would with finer muse sing the praises of the Manx. "A child perhaps yet unborn will do it. A great poet is yet to be, a Manx poet transcending all our 'small doin's.' He will be called Kewish, Shimmin, Quayle, Cottier. All right! He will stumble across my *old ditties*,—he will love them,—he will wonder,—he will muse; the fire will be kindled, and at last he will speak with his tongue."[2]

He appeals to this future poet to come quickly, before the last trace of what the Manx were once has been effaced for ever.

> "Old Manx is waning,
> She's dying in the *Tholthan*.[3] Lift the latch,
> Enter, and kneel beside the bed and catch

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[1] *Letters*, vol. i. p. 223. To S. T. Irwin (November 5th, 1893).

[2] *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 175. To Mr. Rydings (June 3rd, 1896).

[3] Tholthan=ruined cottage.

The sweet long sighs to which the clew
Trembles, and asks their one interpreter in you.

. . . . . .

But come, come soon, or else we slide
To lawlessness, or deep-sea English soundings,
Absorbent, final, in the tide
Of Empire lost, from homely old surroundings,
Familiar, swept. O excellent babe! arise,
And, ere a decade fall from forth the skies,
Unto our longing hearts be born
Cain, Karran, Kewish supreme, supremest *Skillicorn*."[1]

His very patriotism, the exactitude of his work, the use of the dialect—all to "please his countrymen"—is one of the great reasons that his work is permanent. If he had written to please the world, it is probable that his work would not be so entirely Manx, and so would not be marked by the freshness and originality that are two of its especial charms. Brown, in his poems, endeavours to illustrate human nature; but in his case, it was the illustration of human nature as it existed in the Isle of Man. This he succeeded in doing in his resolute, clear-sighted, joyous verses. Brown never wrote as a mere spectator of life; he himself lived keenly, and his poems reflect his actual life, instead of being merely a dream of what the author would have that life to be.

His poetry contains a spark of individuality which kindles our emotions and rouses our sympathies, and we rise from reading it fired with a loving

[1] *Poems*, "Spes Altera," p. 106. (Complete Edition.)

admiration for the people of that small island which has the proud right of claiming him as one of her sons. The same feeling comes when we study his lyrics. Here, instead of our thoughts being turned to his countrymen, our deeper feelings are stirred, or the heart is filled with tears as we realize how deeply the poet suffered. In the "Yarns," he is singing and saying things that have never before been related. In these he breaks new ground, he paints for us a region that has never before been touched; he portrays for us men and women that no poet or novelist before him had shown us—but men and women that are drawn from life, described to us with such vivacity that they live before our eyes, real beings of every-day life. Such interesting pictures of life are calculated to touch the heart, and are worth preserving. For this reason alone, Brown may claim a permanent place in the ranks of poets, in that his poetry contains the essential quality of fire, novelty, interest, and the power of touching the heart.

But there is another and more powerful claim —his individuality. Brown "himself, in his personal feeling, has also phases that have never before been rendered in verse."[1] The principal sources of his poems are three—the ancient Manx legends incorporated in the "Yarns," his personal feelings—the foundation of most of his lyrics—and, thirdly, his own personal observation. Brown wrote poems when he had something to

[1] *Quarterly Review*, vol. clxxxvii., April 1898.

say in verse, and took up his pen only when he was forced by his feelings to describe some scene that had especially struck him. His poem entitled "Octaves" is a good example. In a letter to Mr. Worthington, he describes the weaver and his wife whom he has rendered immortal by this poem:—

"Since you were here and went to Ballaglass, a great human interest has sprung up for me there—a weaver and his wife. They have been there, of course, ages ago, but we didn't happen upon them till 1894. And he is fair, and she is dark; and he is placid, gentle, sweet-eyed, very handsome, and she is—good heavens! a network of fire!—a Scoria? No, not that—the fire is in her eyes, but it is in her heart, and it flames out upon you, and wraps you round, and every wrinkle of her face is furrowed with it."[1]

The last verse of the poem finishes the picture and explains the reason that forced Brown to depict it:—

"*Wrinkled and wizen?* Every line
Is furrowed with sweet longings; flames
Disused, entwine
Our hearts; the once dear names,
The ties no fateful force can sunder,
Recur. Unthought occasion wiles
Our lips; the children wonder,
I hesitate, the weaver smiles."[2]

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[1] *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 168. To A. M. Worthington (March 25th, 1896).

[2] *Poems*, "Octaves," p. 87.

Sometimes, though not often, he uses a story or fact told him by some one else as the core of a poem, as in "Jus' the shy,"[1] which was founded on a tale related him by a sailor.[2] Again, a story which he heard from a lady friend[3] prompted that beautiful sonnet "Ex Ore Infantis."[4]

"Her husband died before her babe was born
Two years ago. *Converted?* Doubt and grief,
Poor soul! she felt.
Her Methodist Creed forlorn
Gave but a Lenten substance of relief.
To-day, beneath the piteous gaze of morn,
Her child is dying. On his little brow
Descends the veil, and all is over now—
Not yet! not yet! For suddenly he springs
As who perceived the gleam of golden wings.
'Dada,' he cries; he knows his father's face
Ne'er seen before. O God, Thou giv'st the grace!
O widowed heart! They live in Heaven's fair light,
Your husband with his boy. The child was right."

Yet though he delighted in "setting such jewels," Brown's best work is the result of his own deep study of human character, or the expression of his deeper feelings.

[1] "In the Coach," p. 17.
[2] *Letters*, vol. i. p. 145.
[3] Miss Graves, December 4th, 18—. Vol. ii. p. 74.
[4] *Poems*, p. 691.

CHAPTER VI.

THE "YARNS"—TOM BAYNES—PAZON GALE.

THE greater part of Brown's work are narrative poems, portraying the Manx life and character, which have appeared under the title of "Fo'c's'le Yarns." The Isle of Man is, of course, the scene of these verses. Mr. Whyte says, "His 'Fo'c's'le Yarns' are a crucial literary feat; apparent roughness with essential finish."[1] The language is racily idiomatic, and the rhyming of the simplest. On first glance, the lines seem of a rough and ready type, but to look carefully into their structure and consider the means by which they achieve their end is to see that they are a result of conscious and deliberate art. They are written in the Manx dialect, because Brown wished nothing to stand between his Manx reader and the simple virtues of his beloved islanders; because he wished to give to his own countrymen a perfectly true picture of the Isle of Man, its inhabitants, their habits and character. We may believe that Brown would have written in Manx if that language had still been currently spoken in the island.—"I have

[1] Article on "Brown" in Miles' *Poets of the Nineteenth Century.*

an idea that Mr. M.'s new book will show plainly that we have arrived at the last squeak of the Manx language proper, so I think what we have to do is to make a *new start*, making Anglo-Manx dialect the basis. In its turn this will probably become obsolete, but meanwhile the catastrophe will be deferred by your stories; and perhaps I may add, mine. Let us, then, make all we write very good and sound—Manx timber, Manx caulking, Manx bolting, Manx everything. Manifestly, we shall not appeal to strangers, nor, in fact, hope to make a penny by them. Neither will the Manx public defray the expense of pen and ink and paper."[1]

The main characteristics of these Celtic yarns are passion and romance: Brown realizes that "the human heart is the centre of everything."[2]

A rugged tenderness is their most striking note; but a sad emotion and humour, alternately genial and grim, are in evidence throughout. The yarns breathe the fervour of an island patriotism (humorously aware of its limits), and of a simple natural piety. In these short tales we are brought face to face with the sternest pictures of humble life: its sacrifices, temptations, triumphs, loves, and crimes; but, though the work is true to fact, the coarseness and unrelenting details that we find in George Crabbe are absent. Brown had the incomparable

[1] *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 83. To E. Rydings (January 19th, 1895).

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 35. To S. T. Irwin (April 1st, 1894).

gift of being able to select the beautiful, memorable, and significant from the trivial, coarse, colourless, and irrelevant. Darwin, in the *Descent of Man*, tells us that "a language, like a species, when once extinct never reappears."[1] If this is true of a language, it is infinitely more true of the manners and quaint ways of thought found among an isolated people. "All the conditions which go to make up a rational form of life and character are constantly changing. To fix and photograph these in the very act and process of change is the work of genius, and requires the highest exercise of literary art."[2] Brown girded himself to such a task with all a poet's love and insight, and his own rich imagination seconded by his undoubted ability. His knowledge of the world and strong grasp of character made it possible to catch the Manx life in movement. Ben Jonson and Crabbe studied life with the greatest care and exactitude, examining the most minute details; but they had not the power to portray its vivacity in the same way as Shakespeare, Molière, Cervantes, Dickens, Burns, and, we may add, Brown. Exact and thorough observation are not enough to make a really great artist. These are only, as it were, the skeleton, the abstract of the reality. The gift of union, intuition, arrangement of words, choice of language, and invention

[1] *The Descent of Man*, by Darwin, p. 90. (Second Edition.)

[2] Article on "T. E. Brown," by Rev. Hughes-Games *Fortnightly Review*, vol. lxxiv. p. 765.

of style are necessary. Brown had all these gifts, and the "Yarns" are the outcome. Ben Jonson, Thackeray, and George Eliot were great describers of men; but they lacked the inventive language that made it possible for Shakespeare and Dickens, Rabelais and Molière to describe faithfully human life. This power, which has been demanded for Burns, may equally be accorded to Brown, for in his "Yarns," in Mr. Henley's words, he has expressed "not merely all the Manxman in him, but also all his humour, all his passionate love of nature, all his unrivalled sense of character, all his theory of life, and the world and time, and therewith as much of the experience and the results, observed and apprehended, of his long and varied and peculiar life as the number of lines he wrote would hold."[1]

TOM BAYNES AND PAZON GALE.

Tom Baynes is the narrator of the ten "Yarns" in the Manx dialect—

> "First comes Tom Baynes among these sorted quills,
> In asynartete octosyllables.
> Methinks you see the fo'c's'le squat, the squirt
> Nicotian, various intervals of shirt,
> Enlarged, contract—keen swordsman, cut and thrust:
> Old salt, old rip, old friend, Tom Baynes comes fust."[2]

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[1] Article on "T. E. Brown" by W. E. Henley. *Pall Mall Magazine*, vol. xxii. p. 586.

[2] *Poems*: Prelude, Third Series "Fo'c's'le Yarns," p. 510.

The model of this honest Manxman was a Peel sailor.[1] Except in the case of "The Indiaman,"[2] which was really told by his sailor friend, Brown only uses him for descriptive purposes—his appearance and his manner; for the rest he was a mouthpiece for all the Manx feeling that was welling up in his heart:—"Tom Baynes; that is, myself in fact. I never stopped for a moment to think what Tom Baynes should be like; he simply is I, just a crabbed text, blurred with scholia 'in the margent' as is your humble servant. So when I am alone I think and speak to myself always as he does."[3]

Tom Baynes in all his yarns is true to nature, but never uses vulgar or coarse words to convey his meaning. His language is imbued with unconventional charm. He pierces below the surface, but does not explore its noisome recesses. He deals largely in the "chiaroscuro of contrast," and makes the events and people he describes stand out by subtle comparison or imaginative staging.

He is very Manx in his exaggerated boastfulness, in his humour, in his religious penchants, in his honest sympathy, and in the kindly affection of a shy and reserved heart. He is not a sound logician; and though not dull, was outwitted on board the *Indiaman*:—

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[1] Lecture, "Manx Characters." *Ramsey Courier*, January 21st, 1893.

[2] *Poems*, p. 605.

[3] *Letters*, vol. i. p. 100. To J. R. Mozley (November 4th, 1882).

"But at last I gripped him: and then we agreed
To 'llowance the kisses, and never to exceed
One a sittin'; and me to be present,
But not to be lookin'.
But bless ye, the one
Was made into two, and three, and four,
And half a dozen, and half a score—
Till the tally[1] got mixed in general,
And our 'llowancin' didn' answer at all."[2]

In this way, notwithstanding all the "caution," Tom Baynes used to circumvent him. Peter Young, the "'printice," made love to Miss Graeme, a young lady whom the captain was taking to her father in Calcutta. Some years later, when Tom Baynes was getting out of a train at "Lunnon," he met her again:—

"I turned, and, behould ye! there was the woman
No mistake, but grew uncommon—
Splendid she was—Miss Fanny Graeme.
I says, 'Your sarvint—is it a dhrame?'
I says; says she, 'Just hould your tongue!
You're speakin' to Mrs. Peter Young;
And here's my eldest son,' says she—
'And as fine a boy as ever you'd see.'
'So you married him?' and she nodded her head—
'Yes, of course.' 'Aw dear!' I said."[3]

There is one other person who plays a prominent rôle in the "Yarns"—Pazon Gale:—

[1] Tally = reckoning.

[2] *Poems*, "The Indiaman," p. 616. (Complete Edition.)

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 617.

"Now, the grandest old pazon, I'll be bail,
That ever was, was ould Pazon Gale.
Aw, of all the kind and the good and the true!
And the aisy and free, and—'How do you do?
And how's your mother, Tom, and—the fishin'?'
Spakin' that nice, and allis wishin'
Good luck to the boats, and—'How's the take?'
And blessin' us there for Jesus' sake.
And many a time he'd come out and try
A line, and the keen he was, and the spry!
And he'd sit in the stern, and he'd tuck his tails,
And well he knew how to handle the sails.
And sometimes, if we were smokin, he'd ax
For a pipe and then we'd be turning our backs,
Lettin' on never to see him, and lookin'
This way and that way, and him a-smokin'
Twis' as strong and as black as tar,
And terrible sollum and regular.

He was a simple Pazon, and lovin' and wise—
That's what he was, and quiet uncommon,
And never said much to man nor woman;
Only the little he said was meat
For a hungry heart, and soft and sweet,
The way he said it: and often talkin'
To hisself, and lookin' down and walkin';
Quiet he was, but you couldn't doubt
The Pazon was knowin' what he was about.
Ay, many a time I've seen his face
All slushed with tears, and him tellin' of *grace*
And *mercy* and that, and his vice so low,
But trimblin'—aw, we liked him though!"[1]

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[1] *Poems*, "Betsy Lee," pp. 127-129. (Complete Edition.)

In the main, Pazon Gale is drawn from a Mr. Corrin, Vicar of Kirk Christ, Rushen, a parish in the south of the island. Brown speaks of him as "quite the dearest and noblest old man I ever met."[1] But many of the characteristics of his own father were introduced into the picture. Mrs. Williamson, Brown's sister, says—"I have always thought that Pazon Gale was a compound of our own father and another Manx clergyman—Mr. Corrin, of Kirk Christ, Rushen. . . . Mr. Corrin's children recognized this, and spoke of it to me."

Brown, in one of his lectures,—on "Manx Celebrities,"—described "Pazon" Corrin "as one that knew young men, and knew how to be jolly with them, considered them, and yet could be thoroughly dignified, and maintain his place with them."[2] Brown had many an opportunity of observing his character, for many a happy day was spent at Rushen, with Mr. Corrin and family.

It was at Rushen, also, that he first met "Chalse a Killey," a wandering idiot, who was welcomed on account of his stories:—

> "Great joy was yours, dear Chalse! when first I met
> you
> In that old Vicarage
> That shelters under Bradda: we did get you
> By stratagem most sage

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[1] Lecture, "Manx Celebrities." *Ramsey Courier*, January 28th, 1893.

[2] *Ibid.*

Of youthful mischief—got you all unweeting
Of mirthful toys—
A merry group of girls and boys,
To hold a missionary meeting;
And you did stand upon a chair,
In the best parlour there;
And dear old Pazon Corrin was from home,
And I did play a tune upon a comb;
And unto us
You did pronounce a speech most marvellous,
Dear Chalse! and then you said
And *sthooghed*[1] the head—
'If there'll be no objection,
We'll now *purseed*[4] to the collection'—
Chalse, poor Chalse!"[2]

The other characters are only concerned with the one "Yarn" in which they appear, and shall be treated under those heads.

Before looking at the "Yarns" separately, it may be interesting to glance at Brown's treatment of human life. The first thing that strikes one in reading the "Yarns" is their continuous movement. People are never described as so many figures brought on the stage in order to enhance the general *mise en scène*. The whole picture is caught in its daily atmosphere; the people are carrying through their usual tasks, the animals are described true to their habits; no item of local colour is omitted. Added to this, Brown depicts with great care and ability

[1] Stroked.

[2] Proceed.

[3] *Poems*, "Chalse a Killey," p. 15.

the salient traits of his characters. The whole is interspersed with humorous and apt comparisons, and the rough, philosophical thoughts of the narrator—Tom Baynes.

Brown does not treat human life from any one point of view; above everything, his portraiture is true to the reality. The rich and poor are found side by side; the good and bad are rubbing shoulders one with the other; the beautiful and the grotesque find each a place; and joy and sadness unite in pathetic reality. It is in this very exactitude of description that the great beauty of Brown is to be found.

Throughout Brown's works there is a graceful refinement, the outcome of his early religious training, widened and developed by his contact with man and his constant observation of human life.

CHAPTER VII.

"THE MANX WITCH"—"CAPTAIN TOM AND CAPTAIN HUGH"—"KITTY OF THE SHERRAGH VANE."

THE three "Yarns" whose names head this chapter are treated before the others, not because they are superior in composition or thought, but because they are representative of Brown's aim; they treat entirely of Manx life and character, feeling and customs.

The underlying idea of "The Manx Witch" is Manx superstition. Writing in the *Ramsey Courier*, Brown says—"Connected, too, but more remotely, with this amiable trait, is the love of the marvellous which, culminating in superstition, becomes a positive evil."[1] In the first poem he has set himself to combat this unwholesome side of the Manx character.

Even at the present day, the inhabitants of the Isle of Man desire no scientific explanation—they much prefer to sink into the depths of their superstitious fancies. This weakness, when brought face to face with medical science, is a real danger.

[1] Article by T. E. Brown, "Manx Character." *Ramsey Courier*, September 23rd, 1893.

Many a time the doctor's remedies are counteracted by some dark potion given to the patient by a person supposed to possess magical powers, or his diagnosis is confused by symptoms which have their origin in the contrivances of some hillside Locusta.

The scene of "The Manx Witch" is laid at Laxey, the plot of the story being the courting of two miners from the Laxdale lead-mines. After a short introduction, that serves to bring the principal characters before us, we find ourselves present at a meeting of a society which the miners had formed to drive away all other suitors of Nessy Brew—"the rose that had grew at the mouth of the mine"[1]—the daughter of a neighbouring farmer. Finally, it is agreed that Jack Pentreath, a fiery little man, and Harry Creer, a big, good-natured fellow, are receiving more attention than any of the others, who, therefore, agree to give up their "sooreyin" (courting). For a time, these two receive equal favours from Nessy; but soon she shows her preference for Jack, and Harry Creer becomes the "dooiney-molla" (the man who backs up a suitor). All goes well until "Misthriss" Banks, Nessy's aunt, a woman of rather bad reputation, curses Jack. Nessy, very much fascinated by her aunt, who was once a lady's-maid in England, believes that she has certain witch's powers, and so goes and offers her a bribe not to hurt her lover.

[1] *Poems*, "The Manx Witch," p. 525. (Complete Edition.)

The wicked woman accepts the bribe, even forcing Nessy to give her the wedding-ring her father had taken from her dead mother's finger, to put on her own. She also uses other means to achieve her end. She invites Harry Creer to tea, and makes him believe that it is he whom Nessy really loves. The following evening Harry tells Jack that he does not intend to play the rôle of "dooiney-molla" any longer, but to enter into his rightful inheritance of Nessy's love. Jack is furious and challenges Harry to fight. They choose a secluded spot on the hill, near a disused shaft, as their battle-field, agreeing that he who should throw the other down the pit should be recognized as Nessy's accepted lover. It is here that Tom Baynes finds them; and after having stopped the fight and revived the combatants, learns how Misthriss Banks has bewitched Nessy, cursed Jack, and befooled Harry. He suggests that they shall shoot the witch with a silver bullet. This they do, but without success. Jack, therefore, goes and asks a lawyer's advice as to the law about witches. He is quickly turned out of the office, but not before he has got, as he says, "a 'pinion gratis."[1]

These efforts failing, Tom Baynes advises that they go to the Pazon. They act on his advice, and go to church the following Sunday morning, and wait on the Pazon afterwards. He explains to them, with Bible quotations, that witches do not now exist, and that if people have any power

[1] *Poems*, p. 576.

over you, it is simply because you give them the power in believing in their spells and curses. He further promises to go and speak to Nessy. This he does on the following day. The young girl is much comforted by his words, but asks him to go and see her aunt, and get her to promise not to interfere in her courting with Jack. The Pazon goes to Misthriss Banks's house on the next day, but fails to find her; he continues to go, but always without success. The fact is, that the supposed witch has suddenly disappeared. For two years nothing is heard of her; and, notwithstanding all her lover's entreaties and Harry's supplications, Nessy refuses to marry Jack.

About this time the directors decide to open up the disused shaft. A party of miners, including Jack and Harry, are told off for the work. They take with them Job, Misthriss Banks's idiot son, to carry their tools. They let him down to place candles on the first level. When he gets about half-way down, the men above hear him call out: and so Jack is immediately lowered to his assistance, and there, on a bank of gravel, he sees the remains of Nessy's aunt. She has seemingly fallen down the pit in trying to gather a herb, for in the gravel near her hand he sees that a mountain flower has taken root. The bones are reverently gathered together and buried in the churchyard. Nothing now hindering Nessy and Jack, they are married, and Harry Creer acts as best man.

As is the case with all the "Yarns," it is very

difficult to select any single passage which will give the reader a just and adequate idea of their beauty. There are, however, some portions of this powerful story that deserve special notice. The vivid comparison of Jack and Harry makes the "dooiney-molla" and "his fiery little groom"[1] stand out with great clearness, and we can figure to ourselves these two miners so different in character and bodily appearance, yet so honest and loving; and we follow their courting with an interest that is not the result of reading a mere enumeration of their qualities:—

"Well now I'll tell you about Harry and Jack—
Aw, dacent fellows, that's a fact.
Jack was lill [little] and Harry was big,
And sometimes taking a hearty swig,
I tell ye, but dacent fellows enough.
Harry was tall, but Jack was tough;
Jack was just like pin-wire,
Jack was just like made of fire,
Lean and supple, hard as a rock,
A reg'lar little fightin' cock.
Harry's hair was just like tow,
Jack's was as black as the wing of a crow;
Jack was sallow and dark o' the skin,
Harry was red astonishin'."[2]

. . . . . .

"But Jack, ye see, if he had a desire
To anything, he was nothin' but fire

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[1] *Letters*, vol. i. p. 123. To A. M. Worthington (October 18th, 1886).

[2] *Poems*, p. 521.

And rage and fury—my gough, the sperrit!
And wouldn't give in afore he'd gerrit [get it].
Wouldn'! mortal uncomfible
To have daelin's with the lek, for they will,
And they will, and they will, and it isn' no use;
Can't help it, it's lek houldin' on like the deuce:
Like these bulldogs, when once they're gript the teeth
There's nothin' 'll slacken them, only death."[1]

. . . . . .

"Now, Harry was a hearty lad,
But ter'ble hard to make him mad
About the lek; he liked a gel—
Very well—very well.
Liked her—certainly; but if he got vexed,
Or bothered, you know, just on to the next—
That was Harry—much the same
Whatever happened—a sort of craem
These chaps has got for blood; it's cool
And sweet and that, and, of a rule,
It's not aisy put out, but,—liquor—well,
Of coorse, of coorse. I could hardly tell
Had Jack any blood in him, but when
The craythur was a-fightin', and then
He had plenty of it and to spare;
But difficult to say the where
It was stowed at him. Harry's was in his face,
All over him was Harry's case."[2]

The original idea of a Lovers' Society is also worthy of notice, from its very novelty. Is not Brown the first poet to introduce this humorous idea into literature?

[1] *Poems*, p. 521. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 523.

"Now it appears they were signin'
Articles—I think there were nine in——
Rules—is it? I don't care—
Rules then—that they'd run it fair;
No chap to take advantage lek
Over the rest; and the smallest speck
Lek it would be of encouragement—
Lek a word, or a nod—then this here gent
To kermoonicate it to the lot
Under penalties to be shot,
For all I know, or hung as high
As Haman, if he tould a lie.
Honour bright! I seen the book
Years after, and even a look
Was down, and how much was countin' for it,
'Longside the name of the chap that gorrit [got it]—
Somethin' like—'Jeremiah Wilde—
Looked at him in the chapel, and smiled—
Two marks; Dick Clucas passin' the farrim [farm]
And Nessy hove a priddha [potato] arrim [at him],
One mark and a half; Nathaniel Fathom—
Nessy held the hymn-book with him
Last Sunday, countin' seven marks'—
Lek that ye know. Aw dear, the larks!
Nonsense, you're thinkin'? Aw, lek enough!
But I hardly think ye know the stuff
Them Laxdale chaps is made of,—no;—
Curious very, treminjus though."[1]

The graceful description of "sooreyin'," or courting, in the orchard equally ought to be quoted:—

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[1] *Poems*, p. 528.

"That's the coortin'! Aw, lave it alone!
The Queen of England upon her throne
Might envy you then. The trees like nets
All knotted over with white rosettes,
Like white ladies standin' theer—
In the spring, of coorse; in the fall of the year
I don't know, but still, for a chice—
But bless ye! an orchard is allis nice:
It's like heaven, I think, and the angels flittin'
From tree to tree. . . .
So, as I was a-sayin'—ay, ay, in the fall
Maybe not so nice; but still the smell
Of the apples—aw dear! they'll do ye! they'll do ye!
Aw, through and through ye! through and through ye!
It's a very lovin' smell is apples—
This stuff the Romans burn in their chapels
Is very sweet! but what is it comparin'
To apples, special goin' a-bearin'
In an orchard—all a surt of 'spicion
Of rum things about, like some faery was fishin'
With a smell for a bait—invisible—
Aw, sartinly—but a smell, a smell."[1]

. . . . . .

"Sooreyin'? yes, sooreyin'!
I'll tell ye what it is, my men—
You don't understand—this gel was gud—
And so was Jack; there's love that's mud,
Not love—I know, I know, Bill Mat,
Ah! no need to tell me o' that!
But love that'll take a gel, and liff her
To the heaven of heavens, that's the differ;
No black disgrace, but pure, man, pure
As the sthrames that gathers in old Ballure—

[1] *Poems*, p. 542.

Why wouldn' God be with the lek?
Walkin', list'nin', I expeck,
Ay, and blessin'—fruits and flowers,
What are they all to the heart that pours
All their joy and all their love
Into one another? God above!
An honest gel and an honest lad!
Can Thou see them, and not be glad?
Thou sees, Thou knows, Thou loves them—ay!
Every kiss and every sigh,
Every sigh and every kiss,
Even if it's not in Genesis."[1]

Perhaps the most poetical passage in this "Yarn" is the one in which Tom Baynes gives a description of the service which Jack, Harry, and he attended:—

"I took a delight
To hear the Pazon readin' the sarvice;
Lek, you know, a lill bit narvous—
Aw, beautiful! For prâechin'—well—
I was likin' him terrible;
But others was sayin' he hadn' the power;
And of coorse he cudn' go on by the hour
Like these Locals and that, nor he cudn' shout
And rag', and fling his arms about
Like a windmill theer, and his body goin' drivin'
Half urrov [out of] the pulpit—and how they're contrivin'
To keep their balance God only knows,
And sweatin' and stranglin' in their clothes,
Most awful they are; and 'Awake! awake!
Ye sinners'; and roors. But delicake—

[1] *Poems*, p. 544.

That was the Pazon—not raw, but ripe,
And mallow, like berries, like a aisy pipe,
That draws like a baby the smooth it's goin'—
There's some that's bad to rattle and groan
Boosely—what? just wantin clanin'—
Ay! But the Pazon that putty [pretty] strainin'
Like God was takin' him for a flute,
And playing on him—*tootle-toot?*
Not Him! but lovely music clear
And sweet. You'd think, if you could hear
An angel smilin', it'd be rather
Like that—what? 'I'll go to my father,'
It's sayin' theer, 'and sinned,' d'ye see!
'Against Heaven,' ay! 'and before Thee
And no more worthy to be callin'
Thy son.' And 'Dearly beloved,' and fallin'
Down on their knees. And 'no health in us,'
And 'lost sheep,' and wuss and wuss.
And then the Pazon, on his own hook,
And the sollum, and the lovely look
On his dear ould face—and a surt of a tenor
And 'desireth not the death of a sinner'—
Like just a mossel higher—ay!
Aw fit to make a body cry—
Fit enough; and safter and safter [softer],
And 'that the rest of our life hereafter—'
My gough! like drops upon a wound,
And all 'through Jesus,' you'll be bound."[1]

The main idea of the poem being to emphasize the superstitious side of the Manx character, the poet has recourse to the current belief in the fabulous "tarroo-ushtey" (water-bull) and "muck-

[1] *Poems*, p. 577.

awin" (river-pig), and to the legendary "modda-doo."[1]

Waldron, in his *Description of the Isle of Man*, gives us an interesting account of this phantom that used to haunt Peel Castle:—

"They say that an apparition, called in their language 'the Mauthe Doog,' in the shape of a large black spaniel, with curled shaggy hair, was used to haunt Peel Castle, and has been frequently seen in every room, but particularly in the Guard Chamber. There, as soon as candles were lighted, it came and lay down before the fire, in the presence of the soldiers, who at length, by being so much accustomed to the sight of it, lost great part of the terror they were seized with at its first appearance. They still, however, retained a certain awe, as believing it was an evil spirit, which only waited permission to do them hurt, and for that reason forbore swearing and all profane discourse while in its company. But, though they endured the shock of such a guest when all together in a body, none cared to be left alone with it. It being the custom, therefore, for one of the soldiers to lock the gates of the castle at a certain hour, and carry the keys to the captain—to whose apartment the way led through a church—they agreed among themselves that whoever was to succeed the ensuing night his fellow in this errand should accompany him that went first, and by this means no man

[1] *Poems*, p. 557.

would be exposed singly to the danger; for I forgot to mention that the Mauthe Doog was always seen to come out from that passage, at the close of the day, and to return to it again as soon as the morning dawned, which made them look on this place as its peculiar residence. One night, a fellow being drunk, and by the strength of his liquor rendered more daring than ordinary, laughed at the simplicity of his companions, and although it was not his turn to go with the keys, would needs take the office upon him to testify his courage. All the soldiers endeavoured to dissuade him, but the more they said the more resolute he seemed, and swore that he desired nothing than that the Mauthe Doog would follow him, as it had done the others, for he would try if it were dog or devil. After having talked in a very reprobate manner for some time, he snatched up the keys and went out of the Guard-room. In some time after his departure a great noise was heard, but no one had the boldness to see what occasioned it till the adventurer returning, they demanded the knowledge of him; but loud and noisy as he had been at leaving them, he was now become sober and silent enough, for he was never heard to speak more. Three days only did he live, and although he was entreated by all who came near him to say a word, or if that was impossible, to make some sign, by which they might know what had happened to him, yet nothing intelligible could be got from him, only that by the distortion of his limbs and features it might be

guessed that he died in agonies more than is common in natural death. The Mauthe Doog was, however, never seen after in the castle, nor would any one attempt to go through that passage, for which reason it was closed up and another way made."[1]

Brown in telling of the "Black Art" does not forget to refer to the celebrated herb doctor, "Ballawhane," who works the white:—

> "I says, 'this wutchin'—the horriderse goin',
> Black, yes, black.' *But, sure, they were knowin'*
> *The Ballawhane was workin' the white!*"[2]

Train describes this herbalist in these words:—

"The seer is a little man far advanced into the vale of life. In appearance, he was healthy and active; he wore a low-crown slouched hat, evidently too large for his head, with a broad brim; his coat, of an old-fashioned make, with his vest and breeches were all of 'loaghtyn' wool, which had never undergone any process of dyeing; his shoes also were of a colour not to be distinguished from his stockings, which were also of 'loaghtyn' wool."[3]

This wizard is the centre of a great number of tales dealing with the wonderful cures he had

[1] *Description of the Isle of Man*, by Waldron (1713), p. 104.

[2] *Poems*, p. 569.

[3] *History of the Isle of Man*, by Train, vol. ii. p. 161.

wrought on animals. "Recovery was supposed to be perceptible from the time the case was stated to him."[1]

"And gives some sperrit,
Or harbs in a bottle; and as soon as you'll gerrit
[get it]
In your fiss, the baste, that's very lekly
Miles away, is batthar toreckly [directly]."[2]

"KITTY OF SHERRAGH VANE."

In this poem, one of the shorter of the "Yarns," Brown has admirably described the independent, hospitable, middle-class Manx farmer. The sailors, fishermen, and lodging-house keepers have been largely spoiled by the influx of visitors; but the farmer, oblivious of the fact that their arrival raises the price of his produce, continues to follow his own bent without troubling about "them or their fashions."

Nicholas Tear, or Nicky-Nick-Nick, is the name of the Manx farmer in "Kitty of the Sherragh Vane." "He has all the boundless curiosity, the thirst for knowledge, miscellaneous, pulpy and piquant, which characterize those that dwell remote,"[3] and is, in every way, one of Brown's most delightful characters.

The tale in itself is not remarkably striking.

[1] *Folk-lore of the Isle of Man*, p. 79.

[2] *Poems*, p. 569.

[3] *Letters*, vol. i. p. 143. To Mrs. Williamson (April 16th, 1890).

Kitty, the pretty daughter of Nicholas Tear, one day finds a half-famished man lying in a field near the house. Filled with pity for his dejected condition, she furnishes him with food and takes him under her care. Her constant absence from the farm excites her brother's suspicion, who one day follows her and discovers the stranger. With the help of Tom Baynes, he brings him to the house, and puts him to bed in the loft. They all question him to learn who he is and why he has come to the island, but no one except Kitty is able to understand the strange language that he speaks. She translates his answers, but refuses to tell them his name. The farmer, not being satisfied with his daughter's interpretation, asks Tom Baynes to act as interpreter. That excellent sailor, notwithstanding his boastful confidence, finds he is unable to make anything out of the strange sounds the sick man utters. The first part of the tale ends with the departure of Tom Baynes and Saul Tear to join their ships.

Two years elapse before Tom Baynes comes again to the Sherragh Vane, to find Kitty and the unknown stranger courting, with the full consent and approval of the farmer. Saul arrives a few days later, and is extremely angry that his sister is engaged to the nameless foreigner. He does all in his power to drive him away from the farm, but is unable to do so. Then he devotes himself to discover his name. He finally achieves his

object by making love to his cousin Jinny, who, having obtained from Kitty the name of her lover, tells it to Saul. He recognizes it as that of a Chartist, and so goes at once to Ramsey to apprise the police of the fact that Blake is living at the farm. When the necessary formalities have been concluded, the officers of the Crown come to the Sherragh Vane and arrest Blake. Whilst Blake is in prison some of the convicts make an attempt to fire the building. He saves the governor's wife and daughter, and helps to put down the disturbance that ensues. For these acts of bravery he is pardoned by the Queen. He returns to the Isle of Man and marries Kitty. Saul gains nothing by his jealous act, as during the voyage he falls overboard and is drowned.

Though the improbability of Saul recognizing Blake's name as that of a Chartist, and the unlikelihood of a fire breaking out just when Blake wanted an opportunity of distinguishing himself, strike one in reading this pretty story as forced, they are not sufficient to damp the interest that the powerfully-written characters entrain. One cannot help being delighted with the honest, hospitable, talkative farmer and his loving, strong, affectionate daughter. Perhaps the most striking passage in this "Yarn" is that which describes Blake's crime, and in which Tom Baynes moralizes over the actual government of the Isle of Man:—

"And what was the row
That Blake was in?
I'll tell you now—
Chartisin'.
You don't remember: but still
There's some of you won't, and some of you will—
Chartisisses [Chartists]—
Them that don't want the Queen for their missus—
Five pints [points of the Charter]—what d'ye call it?—
Manward suff'rin's [manhood suffrage]—vote by ballot."[1]

. . . . . .

"No—bless ye! in the Isle of Man
We don't understand
These 'Polly Tricks' [politics]
And 'knavish thricks'—
And 'Our hopes we fix'—
Lek it's sayin' in the song—
Right or wrong—
And *the* CAUSE? *the* CAUSE!
And *Freedom*! and all about these laws
That's oppressin' the people. Just our own ways
Is doin' for us—and the House of Keys—
Dear me!
They was used to be
Dacent men enough, and put in
At [by] one another, that was answerin'
Fuss-rate; but now I'm tould
They make so bould
To be chised at [chosen by] the people—quite diff'rin' cattle—
And its tittle-tattle, rittle-rattle—

[1] *Poems*, "Kitty of the Sherragh Vane," p. 487. (Complete Edition.)

Sleet and hail—
Like a tin pot tied to the Governor's tail—
Poor man! But aisy to talk!
And put in for to make the law,
But better to hould your jaw—
Aw, better a dale! [deal]
And take a chap the way you find him,
Particklar if he laves his bosh behind him—
D'ye hear? Just so."[1]

The comparing of Kitty to a pewit when she realizes that Saul is likely to discover Blake's retreat is very charming in its natural grace:—

"That's the way, but little I knew
There was another beside, that flew
Like a pewit there from rock to rock,
Keepin' an eye on him, takin' stock
Of all our actin', like a pewit 'll do,
When she's freckened [frightened] that somebody's goin' to discover
Her nest, you know them—pewit or plover,
All as one [all the same], and wheelin' and wheelin',
And squealin' and squealin',
Like a pessin [person = human being]
Disthressin'!"[2]

The Sherragh Vane, though situated in a secluded spot of the Sulby Glen, was made the centre of festivity during any special season by the hospitality of its owner:—

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[1] *Poems*, p. 489. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 454.

"Ay—Saul, the brother that was at her? [whom she had]
Jealous? jealous? well no matter!
Not Kitty—no, no! but gels about,
Of coorse, and plenty of them, stout
And hearty and free, bless ye! turf-cuttin' sayson—
That's the rayson—
And rushes too; and the farmers comin' in carts
From all parts—
And the sarvant gels—
Who else?
And Joan and John,
And coortin' and carryin' on—
And pies and priddhas [potatoes] and cakes and broth,
The best on the No'th [north side of the island]
Up theer,
Like a feer [fair],
Or what is it the quality is callin' it, Mick?
Pick-Nick!
Just so,
And plenty of it, though."[1]

"CAPTAIN TOM AND CAPTAIN HUGH."

Most of the "Fo'c's'le Yarns" smack of the sea, as is natural, seeing that their narrator is a sailor. The striking tale entitled "Captain Tom and Captain Hugh" takes the sea itself as its subject. The scene is laid in Castletown, the principal characters being the two Manx captains so graphically contrasted by the poet. We see Captain Hugh

[1] *Poems*, p. 449.

glum and silent, impatient and restless, with a fiery, scornful spirit, that under the stress of excessive anger loses its balance and drives its master mad. Captain Tom is entirely opposite in disposition to his friend—a man of laughter, he has the happy gift of making his friends cheerful;—good-tempered and indulgent, his honest, keen-sighted common-sense gives him a dignified authority.

The "Yarn" begins with these two men as boys at school together. There they form a lifelong friendship, and both pass into the school of Mr. Corrin, a one-armed man of active and severe propensities, to learn navigation. They prove excellent scholars, and in due course become captains of smacks. Marriage does not part them, as they marry sisters, and live in adjoining cottages, sharing the garden. For some years nothing happens to disturb the tranquil happiness of the two homes. Then the eldest son of Captain Hugh falls in love with Captain Tom's eldest daughter. The mothers are overjoyed, experiencing in the love of their children some of the happiness of their own courting. They hasten to inform their husbands of the good news. Captain Hugh receives it with a silent indifference, but Captain Tom is extremely pleased. This indifference of Captain Hugh may be taken as the first thing that interrupts the happy relations of the two families. Soon a much greater cause for jealousy arises. Mr. Coreen, the owner of the smacks, decides to have a schooner. The better part of the town backs Captain

Tom; the others, headed by a drunken uncle, Ballachrink, are strongly in favour of Captain Hugh. Finally, Captain Tom is chosen by his master to take the new vessel. This news embitters Captain Hugh's heart. He gives the uncle authority to plant a hedge between the two houses, and spends his time in racing the schooner. Whenever Captain Tom goes for a sail, he is sure to find Captain Hugh waiting for him in his smack. One day he is lying in wait as usual, with the uncle Ballachrink and his son Hughie as his crew, when Captain Tom sails out of the basin. All goes well for a time, then a gale springs up, and the sea becomes extremely rough. Captain Hugh refuses, however, to reef his sails, though the boat, on account of the canvas she is carrying, is ploughing through the waves. He knocks the uncle overboard for trying to cut free some of the rigging, and grapples with his son, who expostulates with him. The helm abandoned, the boat swings round and founders. Captain Tom picks up Hughie, but is unable to save his father. In the end the two young people are married, and the hedge that divided their garden is taken away on their wedding-day.

A passage that throws a special light on the Manx character is the charming picture of the domestic affection in the households of the two captains:—

"Now it wasn' often the husbands would chance
To be at home together—may be once

On the summer, ye know; and you'd see the whole crew o' them
Out in the garden that was doin' for the two o' them.
They were lookin' fuss-rate, was yandhar chaps,
And the women wearin' their Sunday caps,
And all the little things as nate, ye know—
'Deed it was worth your while to go
Of an evenin' there, and look over the wall,
And as nice and as happy, though, for all [however]:
And every one with his little bason
Under the trammon [elder tree, to keep off evil spirits] —aw, putty amazin'! [amazingly pretty]
And even the poor Ballachrink 'd be gettin'
Admission them times, and the way he'd be sittin'
And eyein' the childher, and axing to taste,
Half-tight, you know, but the love in his face—
The sowl—and well, it's a pity too
Of the lek, and puzzlin' what to do—
A good-natured craythur, and would allis be hevvin' [having]
His pockets stuffed with knobs to be gevvin' [giving]
To the youngsters; and watchin', you know, and 'd try
To pop them in their porridge on the sly.
But big at the talk, aw, very big;
And disputin' there about the rig
Of a vessel, and reefin', and the lee shores,
And this and that, and to work their course—
Aw, it's him that 'd larn them—and 'Look!' he'd say,
'D'ye see the thing?'—and—'Here's the bay';
And—*such a wind*—and how he'd contrive her—
'Up peak, my lads—down jib, and jive [jibe] her!'
Chut! of all foolishness!
And Captain Tom with the chin on the bress [breast],
And smokin' studdy all the while,
And maybe just a little smile.

But that's the when [time] you'd see, mind you!
The difference of Captain Hugh,
That 'd turn very sharp; and walk a bit,
And rux [shrug] the shouldhers, and blow the spit,
Lek contemptible, lek and growl
Like a savage dog, and couldn' hould [bear]
To hear such stuff—aw, that was the man—
Impatient mostly, you'll understand—
Hot, very hot, in general—
That was Captain Hugh, for all."[1]

Scandal is another Manx characteristic; though, perhaps, not necessarily confined to the Isle of Man. Not the deliberate maligning of another person's character, but the fatal habit of exaggerating the tales one is told, and of composing others, in order to make oneself the centre of an admiring group of flattering auditors. Brown vividly describes this trait in the Manx character. He tells of the effect created in the town by the way in which the two captains received the news of their children's love:—

"And the talk was soon all over the town
That the one captain knocked the other down,
And—*a desperate fight!* but of coorse they hadn,'
And—*the evil eye that was on the weddin'*
At [on the part of] Captain Hugh and—*Careless chat!* [tut]!
No use o' talkin'—He was a black man that!

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[1] *Poems*, "Captain Tom and Captain Hugh," p. 211. (Complete Edition.)

But—*Captain Tom!* and 'Did ye see him there?'
And—*that was the man! aw dear! aw dear!*
Aw, splendid!—the hearty and the kind!
Somethin' like a father! aw, no fault to find,
But only them women!—a pair of slinks,
They hadn' no patience with them Ballachrinks!"[1]

The boastful exaggeration which marks a Manxman's talk—perhaps because he feels he has to draw the long bow, on account of the smallness of his native land—is also amusingly portrayed by the poet in his description of the uncle, as he upholds Captain Hugh's claims to be appointed to the new schooner:—

"And the Ballachrink though, sittin' as grand,
And the pipe in his mouth, and the glass in his hand—
Aw, a terrible big man at 'The Crow.'
A sort of gentleman, you know—
The way with these farmers—and his Sunday hat,
And a frill on his shirt, and all to that [so forth].
And—'Well!' he says, 'There's no mistake
Who's goin' for captain; it's all correct,'
He says, 'It's settled,' he says, 'my hearties.'
And—*Of course!* and—*The influential parties*
That was at Coreen, and not once nor twice;
But the man knew where to go for advice;
Ay! ay! and got it; and what for wouldn' he?
A brother-in-law! and what for shouldn' he?
But wait! but—still—aw, dear! to think!
'I'll lave it to you, then, Ballachrink.'

---

[1] *Poems*, p. 221.

In the parlour—ay! 'But mind ye! my men,
You'll never be mentionin' this again!'
Aw, all in his glory—and the chaps goin' nudgin'
And winkin' there, the way you'd be judgin'
He'd see they were laughin,' and did and didn'—
Lek you'll see a cock upon a midden,
Scratchin'—lek he was sayin' to the hens—
'Look out!' he says, 'My gough! there's grains!'
'There's grains!' he says; and the dirt goin' flyin';
And he'll scratch and scratch, and the hens 'll be eyein'
One another, and smilin' lek,
And may be bitendin' [pretending] to give a little peck,
For manners, you know, lek knowin' his way,
But just the same lek, meanin' to say—
For all he thinks hisself that clever—
The ould chap's gettin' wuss till ever!"[1]

The comparison between Captain Hugh and his son Hughie is perhaps the most striking and cleverly written passage in this poem. Brown is especially happy when contrasting two persons, characters, or things; lighting each up with a delicate handling of their essential points:—

"Well, this Hughie though was a reg'lar bould chap—
They were callin' him Hughie after the ould chap—
Hughie, not Hugh, for a differ [distinction] lek—
Aw, a plucky lad and no mistake;
A splendid hand aboord of a boat—
Aw, he'd stick to anything that 'd float—

[1] *Poems*, p. 225.

Would Hughie—ay, and none of your sauce
Nor brag; and the proud the father was
To see him when he was only a little mossel
With his two reefs tied, and his jib and fo'sail—
Stole [stolen] of coorse; and the sea tha'd [that would] be there!
And the owner shoutin' on the pier—
And my lad with the taffystick [tiller] in his fist,
And a strainin' his back against the list—
Aw, into the rail! into the rail!
And as sollum as if he was carryin' the mail—
And all the sheets trained aft to his hand—
And to see him lie-to was really grand,
Waitin' his chance to come over the bar,
And the father would call, and the owner would swear;
And the little rascal would keek [peep] like a gull
Under his boom and wait for a lull,
And humoured the boat, and pacified her,
Feelin' everything like a spider,
Till he saw the nick [of time], and afore you'd be knowin'
His helm was up, his jib was drawin',
And a lift and a leap and a jerk and a joult,
And he sent her in like a thunderboult."[1]

. . . . . .

"For Hughie was all
For humourin,' but the skipper would haul
On a wind no matter how it was blow'n';
Just like a dog would be peelin' a bone,
Greedy, you know, like a hungry dog,
Greedy, suckin' his luff like grog.
That's the way, and Hughie would look
On the sea like a man would read in a book,

[1] *Poems*, p. 213.

Spellin' big spells, and gettin' them right,
But the Captain would stand like sniffin' a fight
Far off—he would—like challengin',
Suspicious lek, like sayin'—'Now then!
You're at it! are ye? Who'll strike first?
Come on, old stockin'! do your worst!'
Like the sea and himself was swore in their teeth
To fight it out to the bitter death—
Half in anger, half in scorn,
Defyin' it, as if he was born
A purpose to triumph and have the rule of it,
Or draw its cork [get the better of it], and make a fool of it."[1]

From this short survey of the three "Yarns" dealing exclusively with the Manx character, we are able to deduce the main traits that Brown wished to emphasize. The first thing that strikes us is the great power the Manx people have for spinning yarns. These tales are simply repetitions of stories passed from mouth to mouth. They are not the outcome of the narrator's imagination, though his fancy plays no mean part in the enlargement and embellishment of the tale which the native boastfulness sometimes induces. Added to this power of story-telling, they also have a keen sense of humour of nearly every kind—the racy, the pawky, the joyous, the cynical—all, perhaps, except the melancholic. Manxmen are too light-hearted and effervescent to be melancholy.

Perhaps the most striking trait in the Manx

[1] *Poems*, p. 216.

character is its adaptiveness. The Manxman and Manxwoman are able to accommodate themselves to the surroundings which environ them at the moment. A delightful picture of this happy gift is found in "In the Coach":—

"What's the gud of these Pazons? They're the most despard rubbage go'n',
Reg'lar humbugs they are. Show me a Pazon, show me a drone!
Livin' on the fat of the land, livin' on the people's money
The same's the drones is livin' on the beeses honey.

. . . . . .

Shuperstition, just shuperstition, the whole kit,
Most horrid, just popery, clane popery, that's it—
Ay, popery and schamin', and a lie and a delusion and snares
To get money out of the people, which is the Lord's and not theirs!
Money, money every turn,
Money, money—pay or burn!
And where does it come from? I said it before, and I say it again,
Out of the sweat of the workin' man.
Aw, these priests! these priests! these priests!—
Down with them, I say. The brute beasts
Has more sense till us, that's willin' to pay blackmail
To a set of rascals, to a pack of—— Good evenin', Pazon Gale!
Good evenin', sir, good evenin'! Step up, sir! Make room,
Make room for our respected Vicar.—And may I presume
To ax how is Mrs. Gale, sir, and the family?
Does this weather agree?

Rather damp, I dessay! And the Governor's got knighted?
I'm delighted to see you, sir—delighted, delighted!"[1]

He is, moreover, shy, patriotic, hospitable, sympathetic, and loving. Brown said of the Manxman that he "is good and sound, and a man to live with, a lovable and a livable man."[2]

[1] *Poems*, "In the Coach," No. 5: "The Pazons," p. 28.

[2] *Letters*, vol. i. p. 215. To E. Rydings (October 3rd, 1893).

CHAPTER VIII.

"BETSY LEE."

BROWN has written stories dealing with nearly every phase of human life. It was not until he foresaw the immediate prospect of the disappearance of Manx traditions that he devoted himself to describe the habits and characteristics of his island home. This fact explains the difference that exists between his earlier and later writings. His first poems were composed simply to "please his countrymen." "Betsy Lee" belongs to this category.

This first and most poetical of the "Yarns" contains "Tom Baynes' Love Story." Tom's father and Mr. Lee are both fishermen living in contiguous cottages—

> "And their cottages stood on the open beach,
> With a nice bit of garden aback of them each.
> You know the way them houses is fixed,
> With the pigs and the hens and the childer mixed;
> And the mothers go round when the nights begin,
> And whips up their own, and takes them in."[1]

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[1] *Poems*, "Betsy Lee," p. 109. (Complete Edition.)

Mr. Lee has a daughter, Betsy, who was Tom's constant playmate during his childish days. He never knew that he loved her—

"Till one day diggin' upon the sand—
Gibbins (sand-eels),—of course you'll understand—
A lad that was always a cheeky young sprout,
Began a-pullin' of Betsy about;
And he worried the wench till her shoulders were bare,
And he slipped the knot of her beautiful hair,
And down it came, as you may say,
Just like a shower of golden spray,
Blown this way and that by a gamesome breeze,
And a rip-rip-ripplin' down to her knees.
I looked at Betsy—aw dear! how she stood!
A-quiv'rin' all over, and her face like blood!
And her eyes, all wet with tears, like fire,
And her breast a-swellin' higher and higher!
And she gripped her sickle with a twitchy feel,
And her thumb started out like a coil of steel,
And a cloud seemed to pass from my eyes, and a glory
Like them you see painted sometimes in a story,
Breathed out from her skin; and I saw her no more
The child I had always thought her before,
But wrapped in the glory, and wrapped in the hair,
Every inch of a woman stood pantin' there.
So I ups with my fist, as I was bound,
And one for his nob, and knocks him down,
But from that day, by land and sea,
I loved her! Oh, I loved her! my Betsy Lee!"[1]

Shortly afterwards a fortune is left to "Ould

[1] *Poems*, p. 111.

Anthony" Lee, which is announced to him by a lawyer's clerk :—

"You've seen, maybe, that sort of spark?
As neat and as pert and as sharp as a pin,
With a mossel of hair on the tip of his chin;
With his face so fine and his tongue so glib,
And a saucy cock in the set of his jib;
With his rings and his studs and all the rest,
And half-a-chain cable paid out on his breast." [1]

Tom Baynes, coming in with the tide, finds a crowd before the cottages and learns of "Ould Anthony's" good fortune. The news is most unacceptable to him, as he immediately foresees the possibility of his courtship with Betsy Lee being stopped. So instead of going home he turns towards the sea—

"And walked along
To a part of the shore where the wreck of a mast
Stuck half of it out and half of it fast.
And a knife inside of me seemed to cut
My heart from its moorin's, and heaven shut,
And locked, and barred, like the door of a dungeon,
And me in the trough of the sea a-plungin',
With the only land that I knew behind me,
And a-driftin' where God himself couldn' find me.
So I made for the mast, but before I got at it
I saw Betsy a-standin' as straight as a stattit,[2]
With her back to the mast and her face to the water,
And the strain of her eyes gettin' tauter and tauter,[3]

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[1] *Poems*, p. 108. [2] Stattit=statue. [3] Tauter=tighter.

As if with the strength of her look she'd try
To draw a soul from the dull dead sky.
Then I went to her, but what could I say?
For she never took her eyes away;
Only she put her hand on my cheek,
And I tried, and I tried hard enough to speak,
But I couldn'. Then all of a sudden she turned,
And the far-off look was gone, and she yearned
To my breast, and she said:—'You doubted me';
And I said—'I didn' then, Betsy Lee!'"[1]

It is here that Taylor, the lawyer's clerk, finds them, when he comes to congratulate Betsy on her father's good fortune. Offering his arm with ostentatious gallantry, he escorts her home. This alone was enough to rouse Tom's ire; but on Taylor throwing him sixpence for holding his horse, the hatred of the sailor is everlastingly turned against him.

"Ould Anthony" Lee buys a farm with the money which has been left him: but that makes no difference to Betsy and Tom. Their courting continues, but instead of on the shore or in the cottage, as in the past, in the fields, whilst Betsy is milking, and at the farm. The lawyer's clerk comes again, and finds them in the orchard milking the cows. He comes into the orchard and enters into conversation with Betsy. Tom is unable to restrain himself, and so, watching his chance, he turns the teat towards him and squirts the milk

[1] *Poems*, p. 114.

all over his clothes.[1] Taylor is infuriated and threatens to go and tell Mr. Lee. He does not do so, but starts off home. Tom, leaving shortly afterwards and taking a short cut, overtakes him. He offers to fight him, but on Taylor's refusing to do so, throws him over a gate into a field.

All through the spring and summer Taylor is dumb, but one day when Tom is milking the cows with Betsy in the cowshed, Peggy the servant comes and stands at the door all out of breath:—

"'You're wanted,' says she, 'Miss Elizabeth!'
So I got up and I was goin' too;
'Aw, no!' says Peggy, 'that'll never do!'
And she went—and she went—and my heart gave a shiver—
And I never saw her again! no never! never!"[2]

Taylor has told her father that Tom Baynes is a man of very bad character, and has had a child by a certain Jinny Magee. Anthony Lee believes him, notwithstanding Tom's oath that he is innocent. Tom goes and tells the whole tale to Pazon Gale, who believes him, but is unable to shake Anthony's faith in Taylor's statement.

[1] Mr. Moore, the son of the present Vicar of Braddan, told the author that once when Mr. Brown came to the Vicarage he took him (Mr. Moore), then a boy, to the cow-house, to show him a crack through which the milk-maid used to squirt the milk in fun, in the face of her admirers. The poet confessed to once having received the milk in his face.

[2] *Poems*, p. 124.

Tom Baynes goes to sea on a foreign voyage. During his absence Taylor uses every endeavour to make Betsy marry him; but she refuses, although he affirms that Tom has been drowned. Her parents are entirely favourable to the lawyer's suit. Under the stress of their constant pressure, she dies of a broken heart. On his return, Tom Baynes finding her dead, immediately ships for another voyage. Extremely upset by the death of his sweetheart, he leads, whilst his money lasts, a careless life in Liverpool:—

> "And I'm tould there's houses
> Where the people 'll let ye drink your trousis;
> But Higginses! never! and it isn' right!
> Shirt and trousis! honour bright!"[1]

Here, in a small public-house, he finds Jinny Magee, on her deathbed. She confesses to him that Taylor paid her to tell the lie. Tom promises to take care of the child, and on his return to the Isle of Man, gives it to his mother to look after.

In the evening he goes into the churchyard to see Betsy's grave:—

> "It was nearly dark, but I wasn' alone,
> For I seen a man bendin' over a stone—
> And the look, and the heave of the breast—I could see
> It *was* a man—in his agony.
> And nearer! nearer! the head! the hair!
> The stoop!—it was Taylor! Taylor—*there!*

[1] *Poems*, p. 143.

Aw, then it all come back again,
All the throuble, and all the pain,
And the one thought in my head—*him there at her grave!*
And I stopped, and I said, 'May Jesus save
His soul! for his life is in my hand—
Life for life! it's God's command—
Life for life!' and I measured my step.
'So long he shall live!' and I crep', and crep'—
Aw, the murderer's creep—'God give him grace!'
Thinks I—then to him, and looks in his face.
Aw, that face! He raised it—it wasn' surprise,
It wasn' fear that was in his eyes;
But the look of a man that's fairly done
With everythin' that's under the sun."[1]

By the side of her grave Tom realizes that Taylor had loved Betsy Lee, and the great love with which he himself had loved her makes him forgive his enemy.

"'Misther Taylor,' I says, 'we cannot tell how,
But it was love—yes! yes! it was love! it was love!
And He's taken her to Himself above;
And it's Him that'll see that nothin' annoys her.'"[2]

Could a more noble ending be imagined? First, Tom forgives the woman who had lied against him, then he pardons the greater offender—the man who paid her to lie.

If the three "Yarns" in the last chapter be called "Character Yarns," "Betsy Lee" deserves the title of the "Yarn of Love."

[1] *Poems*, p. 149. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 150.

Similarity of idea render "Betsy Lee" and "Enoch Arden" especially suitable for a comparison, which will not be injurious to the author of the "Yarns." The tale contained in both poems is practically the same; the arrangement, however, differing. Whilst Enoch and Philip were children with Annie, Taylor only arrives when Tom Baynes has declared his love to Betsy Lee. There is also a marked contrast in the characters—Philip Ray was a good, honourable, God-fearing man:—

> "Philip's true heart, which hungered for her peace
> (Since Enoch left he had not looked upon her),
> Smote him, as having kept aloof so long."

Taylor was a villain, who thought no means too base too achieve his end:—

> "And hadn't this Taylor come one day
> And tould them I was drowned at sea."[1]

That the two poets treat the subject in a different manner is the outcome of their personality. Tennyson, telling the tale as an outsider, portrays to us the events, actions, and feelings of his characters; Brown, living the tale, expresses the feelings and narrates the events. This difference is in evidence from the beginning to the end of the two poems.

In "Enoch Arden" we are carried back a hundred years and shown a shore with clustering houses on the cliffs and a "moulder'd church":—

[1] *Poems*, p. 137.

"Here on this beach a hundred years ago
Three children of three houses, Annie Lee,
The prettiest little damsel in the port,
And Philip Ray the miller's only son,
And Enoch Arden, a rough sailor's lad
Made orphan by a winter shipwreck, play'd."

Turning to "Betsy Lee," all is different:—

"I said I would? Well, I hardly know
But a yarn's a yarn; so here we go.
. . . . . .
Well—out it must come, though it be with a wrench,
And I must tell you about a wench
That I was a-courtin' of—yes me!
Ay, and her name it was Betsy Lee."[1]

The following description of the play of three poor children in "Enoch Arden" is beautiful in its poetical idea and form:—

"A narrow cave running beneath the cliff:
In this the children play'd at keeping house.
Enoch was host one day, Philip the next,
While Annie still was mistress; but at times
Enoch would hold possession for a week:
'This is my house, and this my little wife!'
'Mine too,' said Philip; 'turn and turn about':
When if they quarrell'd, Enoch stronger made
Was master; then would Philip, his blue eyes
All flooded with the helpless wrath of tears,
Shriek out 'I hate you, Enoch!' and at this
The little wife would weep for company,
And pray them not to quarrel for her sake,
And say she would be little wife to both."

[1] *Poems*, p. 108.

This cannot, however, be compared in reality and vividness with the words of Tom Baynes as he describes the remembrance of his childhood:—

"Now the beauty of the thing when childer plays is
The terrible wonderful length the days is.
Up you jumps, and out in the sun,
And you fancy the day will never be done;
And you're chasin' the bumbees hummin' so cross
In the hot sweet air among the goss [gorse],
Or gatherin' bluebells or lookin' for eggs,
Or peltin' the ducks with their yalla legs,
Or a-climbin' and nearly breakin' your skulls,
Or a-shoutin' for divilement after the gulls,
Or a-thinkin' of nothin', but down at the tide
Singin' out for the happy you feel inside."[1]

The children grow up and we find that Enoch and Philip each love Annie:—

"But when the dawn of rosy childhood past,
And the new warmth of life's ascending sun
Was felt by either, either fixt his heart
On that one girl."

The poet speaks, and we are entranced by the blending of the colours in the picture, but are not convinced. Tom Baynes speaks:—

"Ah, mates! it's wonderful too—the years
You may live dead-on-end with your eyes and your ears
Right alongside of the lass that's goin'
To be your sweetheart, and you never knowin'."[2]

---

[1] *Poems*, p. 110. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 109.

And we recognize the truth and the reality of his seemingly *naïf* speech.

Another touch of Brown's genius is to be found in the portrait of Betsy :—

"Aw, there was somethin' worth lovin' in her—
As neat as a bird, and as straight as a fir;
And I've heard them say as she passed by,
It was like another sun slipped into the sky—
Kind to the old, and kind to the young,
With a smile on her lips, and a laugh on her tongue,
With a heart to feel, and a head to choose,
And she stood just five foot four in her shoes."[1]

Annie, on the contrary, is always the inanimate woman ; a figure to show up the characters of the two men. The same wax-like immobility overhangs the courtship of Enoch and Annie :—

"But as he climb'd the hill,
Just where the prone edge of the wood began
To feather toward the hollow, saw the pair,
Enoch and Annie, sitting hand-in-hand,
His large grey eyes and weather-beaten face
All-kindled by a still and sacred fire,
That burn'd as on an altar."

This is all we are told until the merry ringing of the bells announces their wedding. The Celtic spirit fires the description of Betsy and Tom's "coortin'" with all the humour and details of reality :—

[1] *Poems*, p. 112.

"And Betsy and me sittin' back in the chimley,
And her a-clickin' her needles so nim'ly,
And me lookin' straight in ould Anthony's face,
And a-stealin' my arm round Betsy's wais'.
Aw, the shy she was! But when Anthony said—
'Now, childher! it's time to be goin' to bed,'
Then Betsy would say, as we all of us riz—
'I wonder what sort of a night it is?'
Or, 'Never mind, father! I'll shut the door.'
And shut it she did, you may be sure;
Only the way she done it d'ye see?
I was outside, but so was she!
Ah, then was the time!—just a minute! a minute!
But bless me, the sight of love we put in it!
Ah, the claspin' arms! ah, the stoopin' head!
Ah, the kisses in showers! ah, the things that we said!"[1]

Tennyson gives us a lovely statue beautifully modelled and worked. Brown shows us two people; but though perhaps they are not of such perfect form as the Laureate's, they are alive, they are real persons moving and loving before our eyes.

The tales continue, and Enoch and Tom are forced to leave their homes. Both poets have risen to the summit of beauty in their pathetic portraiture of these leave-takings. Quotations from the two poems will show that Brown has nothing to learn from Tennyson in this respect:—

"And Enoch faced this morning of farewell
Brightly and boldly. All his Annie's fears,
Save, as his Annie's, were a laughter to him.

[1] *Poems*, p. 112.

Yet Enoch as a brave God-fearing man
Bow'd himself down, and in that mystery
Where God-in-man is one with man-in-God,
Pray'd for a blessing on his wife and babes
Whatever came to him; and then he said
'Annie, this voyage by the grace of God
Will bring fair weather yet to all of us.
Keep a clean hearth and a clear fire for me,
For I'll be back, my girl, before you know it.'
Then lightly rocking baby's cradle, 'and he,
This pretty, puny, weakly little one,—
Nay—for I love him all the better for it—
God bless him, he shall sit upon my knees,
And I will tell him tales of foreign parts,
And make him merry, when I come home again.
Come, Annie—come, cheer up before I go.'

. . . . . .

Enoch rose
Cast his strong arms about his drooping wife,
And kiss'd his wonder-stricken little ones;
But for the third, the sickly one, who slept
After a night of feverish wakefulness,
When Annie would have raised him, Enoch said
'Wake him not; let him sleep; how should the child
Remember this?' and kissed him in his cot.
But Annie from her baby's forehead clipt
A tiny curl and gave it; this he kept
Thro' all his future; but now hastily caught
His bundle, waved his hand, and went his way."

Brown's treatment of the subject divides Tom Baynes' leave-taking into two parts. The first when "Ould Anthony" tells him about Taylor's statement; and Tom defends himself against the

lie in a pathetically passionate speech, ending with a broken-hearted cry to God:—

"Betsy! Betsy! my darlin' love!
Betsy! Betsy! O Father above!"[1]

And after picking a bit of honeysuckle, and putting it in his breast, leaves her house. The second when he quits his home:—

"And it's into the house, and 'Mawther,' I says, 'I'm off.'[2]

. . . . . .

'Hush! mawther!' I says, 'aw, mawther, hush!'
And she turned to the fire, and I saw her brush
The tears from her eyes, and I saw the workin'
Of her back, and her body jerkin', jerkin';
And I went, and I never said nothin' lek,
But I put my arm around her neck,
And I looked in her face, and the shape and the strent' [strength],
And the very face itself had went
All into one, like a sudden thaw.
Slished and slushed, or the way you've saw
The water bubblin' and swirlin' around
The place where a strong man have gone down.
And I took her and put her upon the bed
Like a little child, and her poor ould head
On my breast, and I hushed her, and stroked her cheek,
Talkin' little talk—the way they speak
To babies—I did! and then I begun
To think of yandhar Absalum,
And David cryin', 'My son! my son!'

---

[1] *Poems*, p. 126. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 130.

And the moon came round, and the light shone in,
And crep' on her face, and I saw the thin
She was and the wore, and her neck all dried
And shrivelled up like strips of hide;
And I thought of the time it was as warm
And as soft as Betsy's, and her husband's arm
Around it strong and lovin', and me
A-cuddled up, and a-suckin' free,
And I cried like Peter in the Testament,
When Jesus looked at him, and out he went,
And cried like a fool, and the cock a-crowin',
But what there was in his heart there's no knowin'.
And I swore by the livin' God above
I'd pay her back, and love for love,
And keep for keep, and the wages checked,
And her with a note, and all correct.
Then I kissed her and she never stirred;
And I took my clothes, and, without a word,
I snicked the door, and by break o' da
I was standin' alone on Douglas quay."

The two heroes return—Enoch to find his wife married to Philip Ray, Tom to discover that Betsy is dead. Each poet gives a description of the men's reception of the news of the loss of the women they loved. The author of "Enoch Arden" makes him hear the news in a calm, inanimate manner:—

"Only when she closed
'Enoch, poor man, was cast away and lost,'
He, shaking his grey head pathetically,
Repeated muttering, 'Cast away and lost';
Again in deeper inward whispers 'lost!'"

[1] *Poems*, p. 134.

Is it probable that Enoch, "the rough sailor lad," would have received the death-blow to all his hopes in this pathetically philosophical way? Is it not far more likely that his passion would have over-mastered him, and that he would have given vent to some such expression as Tom Baynes when his mother told him "Betsy is dead, Tom, Betsy is dead," when he cries with passionate vehemence?—

"'He'll die! he'll die!
This night, this very night,' says I;
'He'll die before I'm one day ouldher';
And I stripped my arm right up to the shouldher.
'Look here,' I says; 'hasn't God given
The strength?' I says; 'and by Him in heaven,
And by her that's with Him—hip and thigh!
He'll die this night, he'll die! he'll die!"[1]

The poems end in showing the power of love to forgive. On his deathbed Enoch asks Miriam Lane, the old woman who keeps the inn, to tell his wife that he has died, and to give her the baby's curl:—

"And say to Philip that I blest him too;
He never meant to do us anything but good."

Brown chooses another scene—a churchyard, where Tom Baynes has come to find Betsy's grave; and in a few lines shows how a great love can enable one even to forgive a present living enemy:—

[1] *Poems*, p. 140.

"Ah, mates! however it was with me,
He had loved her, he *loved* her—my Betsy Lee!
'Taylor!' I said; but he never spoke;
'You loved her,' I said, 'and your heart is broke.'
And he looked—aw, the look!—'Come, give us your hand.'
I says—'*Forgive you?* I can! I can!
For the love that was so terrible strong,
For the love that made you do the wrong.'"[1]

Is there anything more magnificent than this victory of love? It is much more easy to bless your enemy who is absent, when you are dying, than to forgive him present by the side of the grave of the woman he has taken from you.

This short comparison may serve to show that as a painter of life, as a describer of the details of every-day existence, Brown is superior to Tennyson. If Tennyson takes the first place among modern poets on account of the range and breadth of his work, Brown is the first amongst them by his original and inventive drawing of human character.

[1] *Poems*, p. 149.

CHAPTER IX.

"TOMMY BIG EYES."

"TOMMY Big Eyes" is the example of another phase of Brown's work. This "Yarn" cannot be placed amongst those that picture any essential trait or idea of the Manx land or people; nor is the graceful lightness and unity of purpose that are remarkable in "Betsy Lee" here to be noticed. The poet seems to have had three distinct ideas in his mind when he wrote it. The first was to express in words something of the tactile sensation that one finds in the air of the Manx curraghs, the second to reveal in verse his musical feelings, and the third to denounce hypocrisy. This last he does by exposing a sham Methodist, one of those of whom he writes—

> "Aw well, I'll swear
> Ould Wesley wouldn' know them a bit."[1]

Ready as Brown is to praise all true worth, he does not hesitate to denounce, in no uncertain manner, all baseness and sham; willing as he is to give all honour to religion and religious things, the

[1] *Poems*, "The Doctor," p. 389.

very intensity of his belief makes him especially hard on pretence and insincerity. These three ideas are welded into one whole in the charming love story composed by the poet, of which Tommy Big Eyes and Nelly Quine are the principal characters.

The "Yarn" opens with Tommy as a little boy at school. Brown gives a delightful description of the timid little lad, who by his shyness and strange dress is the butt of the mixed village school. One of the girls is called Nelly Quine. It is the delight of his schoolfellows to make Tommy believe that she is in love with him. One day he brings her a beautiful little hen in a basket. As ill-fortune would have it, the basket is knocked over during the prayer, and out flies the hen. The children all give chase, and it is finally captured. On Nelly asking him, Tommy owns that he has brought it for her. The following day the master severely canes Tommy; but he is recompensed—Nelly walks home with him, and, though he does his best to prevent her, kisses him—on the back of the head. Tommy is in an ecstasy of joy, and lies down in a field of clover to think over his good fortune:—

"She kissed me!
She did! she did! she did!"[1]

In his joy he takes no notice of the time, and sleeps until the stars are out. His father beats him for staying out so late. This second caning is too

[1] *Poems*, "Tommy Big Eyes," p. 251. (Complete Edition.)

much for the lad, who becomes ill and is not able to return to school.

Shortly afterwards he goes as a servant on a neighbouring farm, owned by Archie and "Missis" Cain. Cain is the one real villain of all Brown's work. He is a "Local" (local preacher), but finding it more convenient to stay in one place, marries a rich woman,—in order to lead her in the Heavenly Way; and becomes a sort of apostle, prince, and ruler of his neighbours. Tommy soon becomes a great favourite with his mistress, a nice, good woman, who has had the misfortune of loving and being loved by a certain Captain Moore, whom she was not allowed to marry. Many happy evenings are passed at the farm, Tommy reading to them, or playing on his violin.

About this time Nelly comes to be housemaid at Captain Moore's. Tommy meets her, and all his old love is kindled afresh. During the summer his courting is quite easy, as they are able to go walks together; but when winter arrives he is too shy to go to the Hall, but watches for her in the gardens, so creating the rumour that the place is haunted. Taking advantage of Tommy's absence, the son of Captain Moore pleads his love, and Nelly, notwithstanding all that Missis Cain can do, runs away with him. The yacht in which they sail is wrecked the same evening: the young captain perishes, but Nelly is saved, and is taken by Missis Cain to be a servant at the farm. On hearing that Nelly has sailed with Captain Moore,

Tommy runs away to Douglas, where he finds her family in great distress; for her sake he takes them with him and supports them.

Cain is very much taken with Nelly, and under the guise of teaching her the Scriptures, makes love to her. She, in her innocence, suspects nothing until one day he proposes to her. She runs away from him and tells Missis Cain. His wife had long suspected his infidelity, and in the shock of finding her suspicions realized, poisons herself; leaving a note to say that it was by her own hand that she met her death.

On the day of his wife's funeral Cain again proposes to Nelly, who threatens to stab him if he continues his importunities. Cain is extremely angry and takes advantage of the threat to propose to her the following day, having a policeman outside the door. Nelly seizes a knife, and Cain gives her in charge for attempting his life and murdering his wife. On hearing of it, Tommy employs a noted lawyer to defend her. The man of law makes Cain give him his wife's letter. This villain, realizing that everything is against him, flies to America. Nelly is released, and Tommy is able at last to marry the sweetheart of his childish days. The interest of the love story first centres on Tommy's seeming indifference, then on Nelly's fickleness and want of feeling, which is finally dispersed by Tommy's unselfish interest on behalf of her family.

To fully realize Brown's first aim in this poem,

it should be understood that the part of the island known as the Curragh is the broad stretch of flat land which lies to the seaward of the mountains at Ballaugh. The beauty of this swamp—for such in reality it is—is that its greater part remains in the charming uncultivated state in which Nature left it—rough, untouched, wild, luxurious, and exquisitely beautiful. "The air is full of the odour of wild flowers, of weed blossoms, of damp scara soil, of turf, and of turf pits."[1] This paradise of uncultured nature is the home of birds of every colour and every note. A simple quotation will serve as an example of Brown's method:—

"So he liked the Curraghs well,
Did Tommy; and they've got a beautiful smell,
Upon my word, them Curraghs; yes!
Even in the Spring they're not amiss,
When the soft little sally [willow] buds is busted,
And all the sthrames about is dusted
With the yellow meal; but—in summer I'm blowed!
Just before the grass is mowed—
Kirk Andreas way, St. Jude's, Lezayre—
Just lie down, no matter where,
And you'll think you're in heaven; and the steam and the heat
Fit to smother you, the sweet—
Splendid too, when a chap is home
From a voyage; very wholesome to 'm,
Clearin' the blood—astonishin'
The way it exthracks the salt from the skin."[2]

[1] *The Little Man Island*, by Hall Caine.

[2] *Poems*, p. 270.

The poet's delineation of his musical feelings fills the greater part of the first half of the poem. Brown is specially apt in finding opposite comparisons for his musical ideas. Take the description of Tommy playing on his violin:—

"And Tommy had a fiddle too,
And I don't know what was there he couldn' do
With yandhar fiddle—the way it 'd mock
Everything—it 'd crow like a cock,
It 'd hoot like a donkey, it 'd moo like a cow,
It 'd cry like a baby, it 'd grunt like a sow,
Or a thrush, or a pigeon, or a lark, or a linnet—
You'd really thought they were livin' in it.
But the tunes he was playin'—that was the thing
Like squeezin' honey from the string;
Like milkin' a fiddle—no jerks, no squeaks—
And the tears upon his mistress' cheeks."[1]

Or his attempts and final success to learn the bass viol:—

"So Tommy was bothered, and you see the raison,
For he thought it couldn' do nothin' but bas'in';
And hadn' no notion the awk'ard brute
Could play as soft as any flute.
And deeper and deeper still he was goin';
And sawin' the bass' to the very bone,
And no music at all; till at last the fact is
The misthress axed him to have his practice
Somewhere else. So away to the barn
Goes Tommy with his big consarn,

[1] *Poems*, p. 258.

Determined, I tell ye, to have it out with it;
For he hadn' the smallest bit of a doubt with it
But the tune was in it somewhere, you know.
So there he was; and he tried the slow,
And he tried the quick; till at last, by jing!
He come upon the tannor [tenor] string,
That he come upon many a time afore;
And ript and rapt, and tagged and tore
And nothin'—but now it was different,
Astonishin' the way it went,
Whatever the touch, or whatever the turn,
Like butter comin' on the churn,
When you're nearly beat—*like butter*, he was sayin'
Like butter,—the soft, you'll obsarve, he was playin'—
Like butter, aw, he worked it grand!
Like a living thing, he said, *under his hand;*
Like rivers of water in a thirsty land.
So Tommy ran up the string like a paper
Will run up to a kite; aw, he made her caper,
Rejisin', you know, the high he got
After yandhar bassar's, aw, workin' it hot,
And rispin' and raspin', and thrimmin' and thrummin
Till the very thrashin' board was hummin'."[1]

The sketch of Pazon Croft shows us that Brown considered music partly as a natural gift, and partly as the result of early training and environment:—

"I've heard it stated
That Pazon Croft was eddikated
In one of them big churches they've got
Over in England—*cathedrals*—what?

[1] *Poems*, p. 264.

Cathedrals—ay—and the lovely he sung,
He was put to the urgans [organs] very young—
Not much like this music that's driven in
Hapes of people, but what he was livin' in,
For, the finest music that ever was done
He'd hardly be knowin' when it begun,
Or when it left off—just so, just so—
Havin' it all inside him, you know.
And if the trees, or the stacks in the yard,
Had struck up, he'd been perfectly prepared,
Bless me, if yandhar man had met
A quire of angels that was just let
On Snaefell[1] to practise their hosanners,
He'd ha' axed to look over a book with the tanners—
That's all."

The most original and striking passage under the head of Music, is that in which the poet describes a fugue. There is nothing to be compared with it in the works of our modern or ancient poets:—

"I'm goin' to tell you what a fudge is—
Fudge—dear heart!
What a start!
Well, obsarve! away goes a scrap,
Just a piece of a tune, like a little chap
That runs from his mammy; but mind the row
There'll be about that chap just now!
Off he goes! but whether or not,
The mother is after him like a shot—

---

[1] Highest mountain on the isle.

[2] *Poems*, p. 266.

Run, you rascal, the fast you're able!
But she nearly nabs him at the gable;
But missin' him after all; and then
He'll give her the imperince of sin;
And he'll duck and he'll dive, and he'll dodge and he'll dip,
And he'll make a run, and he'll give her the slip,
And back again, and turnin' and mockin',
And imitatin' her most shockin',
Every way she's movin', you know;—
That's jist the way this tune'll go;
Imitatin', changin', hidin',
Doublin' upon itself, dividin':
And other tunes comin' wantin' to dance with it,—
But haven't the smallest chance with it—
It's that slippy and swivel—up, up, up!
Down, down, down! the little pup—
Friskin', whiskin'; and then as solemn,
Like marchin' in a double column,
Like a funeral: or, rather,
If you'll think of this imp, it's like the father
Comin' out to give it him, and his heavy feet
Soundin' like thunder on the street.
And he's caught at last, and they all sing out
Like the very mischief, and dance and shout,
And caper away there most surprisin',
And ends in a terrible rejisin'.
That's Back's, that's fuges—aw, that's fine—
But never mind! never mind!"[1]

Brown's third aim in this poem was to expose hypocrisy. In order to accomplish his end he creates the character of Cain:—

[1] *Poems*, p. 267.

"Cain was a 'Local,' you'll understand—
Yes! aw, the very head of the Plan.
They said to preach he was only fair,
But you couldn' touch him for a prayer—
Soundin' out like a trumpet-blast;
And shockin' powerful with a class.
I don't know much about their rigs,
These Methodists that has their gigs,
And travels about; but Cain preferred
To stay at home, and preach the Word
To his neighbours there. So he got to be
A sort of Apostle among them, you see,
A prince and a ruler among his people,
A tower of the truth, a reg'lar steeple
Was Cain; and had his mortgages,
And money out at interest,
With all the *members*—isn' that the name?—
And even the chapel itself the same.
I've heard him there—a tremenjis voice—
'Rejoice!' he'd say, 'my friends, rejoice!'
And up the high you couldn' think,
And up, and up,—but afore you could wink,
Down like a gannet, like he wanted to pin
The divil in soundin's![1] and then he'd begin,
And he'd wrestle and groan, and he'd thump and he'd thwack—
A black-haired man, and his eyes was black."[2]

Space does not permit of a quotation to describe Cain's love-making to Nellie under the guise of Christian instruction; to tell how he always takes her to chapel with him, and makes her believe that

[1] Shallow water. [2] *Poems*, p. 260.

he is a good and holy man; how he reads the Bible with her, in order to prepare her for heaven, always choosing the chapters that speak of love:—

"And lizzen to this:
Greet one another with a holy kiss!
'See!' he'd say, 'my children, see
The joy of Christian liberty!'
If it hadn' been for *the unrighteous leaven*
See what kisses we'd be hevvin."[1]

Notwithstanding all his baseness, he realizes that God is more powerful than he, and is punishing him for all his wickedness. With a cry of despair he calls to Him in heaven:—

"O God!
I know Thy rod! I know Thy rod!
She can't be mine! she can't be mine!
O Nelly Quine! O Nelly Quine!
But why? Oh, why? Isn' there a place
In all the world, a little space,
Nowhere? Nowhere? a space, a spot—
Oh, is there not? oh, is there not?
God of mercy, in all these lands,
Where I can be free from Thy commands?
Somewhere! somewhere! there must! there must!
O God, I am but feeble dust,
A worm, a fool, a stupid liar—
O give me but my heart's desire!
God in Heaven! what's the gud of me?—
I cannot do the thing Thou wud o' me—

[1] *Poems*, p. 304.

I was never convarted, I only shammed—
I'm lost already! O God, I'm dammed—
I never loved Thee, nor Thy word—
Lave me to myself, O Lord!
I'm weak, O Lord, I can't stand firm!
What's all this bother about a worm?
Drop me! Lave me! What matter to You?
Give me Nelly, and that'll do."[1]

These quotations will serve to show how Brown describes the one really detestable character in his works. We see how he makes him descend into the worst depths of infamy only to realize that God is present everywhere; that His glance follows him, that He will not cast him away though he is "but a worm." The poet in these almost satirical passages has caught the salient facts that show the man's character, and portrayed them with a vivid touch of genius.

Of the tale contained in the "Yarn," a few extracts taken at random will best show that it is not merely a covering for the poet's thoughts, purely a binding for the three ideas, but a story of brilliant interest. The opening of the "Yarn" giving a description of Tommy, immediately makes us love the timid little lad:—

"Now, Tommy was as shy as a bird:
'Yes' or 'No' was the only word
You'd get from Tommy. So every monkey
Thought poor Tommy was a donkey.

[1] *Poems*, p. 307.

But—bless your soul!—lave Tommy alone!
He'd got a stunnin' head of his own;
And his copies just like copperplate,
And he'd set to work and cover a slate
Before the rest had done a sum;
But you'd really have thought the fellow was dumb—
He was that silent and bashful, you know;
Not a fool—not him—but lookin' so.
Ugly he was, most desperate,
For all the world like a suckin' skate.
But the eyes! the eyes! Why—blow the fella!
He could spread them out like an umbrella—
You'd have wondered where on earth he got them
Deep dubs of blue light with the black at the bottom,
Basins of light. But it was very seldom
You could see them like that, for he always held them
Straight on his book or whatever he had,
As if he was ashamed, poor lad!
And really they were a most awful size;
And so we were callin' him 'Tommy Big Eyes.'"[1]

It would be hard to find a more realistic passage than the lines describing the master's anger and speech before he caned Tommy for having brought a hen to school—as a present for Nellie:—

"*He'd make an impression,*
The master said; and he gave him a threshin'
In the good old style, with your thwickumy-thwackumy!
Slishin'—slashin'! bick-o'-me-back-o'-me!
And 'Fowls!' he said. 'What next?' he said—
'Ducks and geese!'—and, 'Hould up your head,'—

[1] *Poems*, p. 242.

'*Pigs and geese*, as *like as not!*
Bulls of Bashan! You couldn' tell what!
The whole of the farm! 'But, look ye here!'
He said—and he caught him a clip on the ear—
'You insolent vagabone!' he says,
'Who's goin' to see the end of this?'
Was it fowls!!! Well, well! had it really come
To fowls!!! Why, it abslit struck him dumb,
He said. *Of coorse*, he said, *marbles he knew,*
And even, now and then, an apple or two;
And liked his scholars to be cheerful;
But—fowls!!! he said—*it was simply fearful!*
No, he couldn', he couldn' pretend,
He really couldn', to say where would it end.
Abominable, he said, *the habits*
Of children nowadays!—the rabbits
And rubbish! he said; and 'Fowls!' he said—'Fowls!'
And he lifts his voice, and reglar howls
And the lot of us poor little blokes
Takin' care to laugh at all his jokes.
Oh! he said, *it wasn' no use!*
And down came the cane like the very deuce;
By Jove! he laid into him like greens,
Till poor Tommy was all in smithereens—
Poor little chap! the way he was tanned!
But stood it grand! stood it grand!"[1]

. . . . . .

"So when Nelly came back, the whole of the row
Was over, you know; but anyhow,
The master didn' say a word
To her at all, but of coorse she heard—

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[1] *Poems*, p. 249.

'Took and pounded him into jammy!'
We said, and the way she looked at Tommy!
But Tommy didn' look at her.
Tommy kept his eyes on the floor,
But I never saw anythin' beautifuller
Than Nelly's little face, and the colour
Comin' and goin' in her cheek;
And her eyes, that if they didn' speak—
Well, that was all. And weren't they pretty!
Yes; but now they were wells of pity—
Wells of pity, full to the brim;
And longin' to coax and comfort him.
Aw, she couldn' take them off him, I'll sware!
But whether of this Tommy was aware
I cannot tell; for he wouldn' look,
But the head of him down on the slate or the book
Like nailed; but still a way with his back,
Or his body altogether lek,
And a sort of a snugglin' with his head
That showed he was a little bit comforted."[1]

This quotation shows the reason why Nelly began to love Tommy; another fine passage gives the result:—

"And Tommy outside of the Castle wall
With the car; but he hadn' the mother at all
That time; and Nelly, and the people expectin'
Lek she'd go to Tommy, lek a sort of directin'.
And in with her straight, and stooped her head,
And—'You've beat me, Tommy! you've beat me!'
she said.

[1] *Poems*, p. 250.

But, half-way to Douglas, this Nelly got bouldher
And the head was slipped on Tommy's shouldher,
And the whisperin' in Tommy's ears,
And his arm round her waist, and tears—tears—
Tears—I'll lave it to any man livin',
Sweeter to Tommy than the rain from heaven.'

And so of coorse they got married at once?
Bless ye! where would be the sense?
But it's married they got; and this little wuch
Worked with Tommy, and Tommy got ruch.
And the farm on the North—Renshent, ye know,
Was comin' to the heir-at-law,
That lived in England, and willin' to let it,
And Tommy terrible wantin' to get it,
And got it—the very primmisis [premises],
And there he is now—aw, 'deed he is!"[1]

[1] *Poems*, p. 327.

CHAPTER X.

"THE DOCTOR."

THIS poem is generally recognized by competent critics as Brown's masterpiece. Max Müller spoke of it "as if not one of the best hundred books of the world, yet as one in which the vividness of imagination and of language and of sympathy most surprised him."[1] It is certainly to be ranked in the forefront of the poems of the last century, "because of the consistency of its plot, the sharpness and clearness of the character drawing, and the sanity of the moral tone."[2] Before it was published, the poem was privately circulated among Brown's friends.

An anecdote of Canon Wilson's shows the enormous power this "Yarn" has with the people. The Canon, when a master at Rugby, was dining with the then Mayor of Halifax, when a telegram arrived to say that the lecturer who was announced to give a lecture on Duplex Telegraphy that evening, owing to an accident, was unable to

[1] *Pall Mall Gazette.*

[2] Article on the "Poems of T. E. Brown." *Quarterly Review*, April 1898.

come. The Mayor did not know what to do, so asked his friend if he could give a lecture on any subject he liked. Canon Wilson agreed to do so, and held a vast audience throughout the evening by reciting long passages from "The Doctor." After his "causerie" the Town Clerk came to him, and promised him an audience of 3000 persons if he would repeat his lecture on the following evening. That an audience who had assembled to listen to a scientific lecture was entranced by Brown's poems is a triumph, and an ample proof of their stirring value.

Brown was so careless about business matters, says Canon Wilson, "that when 'The Doctor' was about to be printed he could not find a copy of his manuscript, and had to come and borrow mine."

The poem might be called the "Philosophical Yarn," as its conception is much deeper than those already examined. "It is the utterance of a man of open soul; of a brave, large, free-seeing man, who has a true brotherhood with all men."[1] A sadder note than is to be found in other "Yarns" rings throughout. We feel that the poet has passed through sorrow and looks upon the world differently from the way in which he regarded life when he wrote his earlier poems. The lesson he wished to teach seems to be the powerlessness of intellect to save a man. Throughout, the ability and learning of the Doctor are treated as most

[1] Carlyle, Essay on "Sir Walter Scott."

precious and most salutary; but we are shown their impotence to sustain him when overtaken by trouble and despair.

The tale opens with a description of the Doctor as he was during his later days in the island, and we are introduced to an amusing scene in which he falls into a harbour through his intemperate habits, and is rescued by the soldiers. We are then taken back to his early life as a young London practitioner. In giving an account of the house of a certain baronet, whom he attends, the poet humorously portrays the Manx exaggeration:—

"Aw, that was the man with the money—ay!
And a house at him, mybe ten stories high—
And nothin' but gool (gold). Chut! Nothin' but gool,
Every chair and every stool!
And the cups and saucers—high uncommon!
'High, aw, high! And never no woman
For cook in the kitchen at them there,
But a sort of a divil they called *mounseer*—
French, it's lek, and cockin' his chin,
And jabberin', and jabberin'.
Aw, gool wasn' nothin' yandharwheres—
Hadn' they bank-notes in the chairs
For stuffin?"[1]

The Baronet was a widower, and had an only daughter. Nothing was more natural than that the young doctor, the type of well-developed manhood, should attract her love; and that he, being daily thrown in her path, should return her affec-

[1] *Poems*, p. 349.

tion. The poet, with graphic pen, describes the incidents of their courtship:—

"And bad enough in the town, but wuss
When ould Sir John gave a rattlin' cuss
And it's on to the country, at your sarvis!
The Docthor must come with him for harvis!"[1]

. . . . . .

"Now, the counthry air
Is terrible for love, I'll swear—
Terrible to make it grow,
And take a root, and blossom and blow
Like the roses, and all the flowers. The lek
Isn' in towns, and you can't expeck.
For people is lovin' in towns of course,
But it isn' the deep, and it hav'n' the force,
Nor wholesale lek; and sweet, the way
It is in the counthry, with the cows and hay,
And all to that; but a sort of a bother,
And a-aggravatin' one another,
Or makin' believe; and a hum and a huff,
And none o' the juice o' the rael stuff—
Somethin' like the milk they've got,
Half of it water."[2]

. . . . . .

"But it soon came out in London for all,
The very next winter—a terrible ball
They were havin', lek maybe thousands there,
And the jingin' and shovin', just like a fair.
And the Docthor not very careful though,
But took the fancy, and off he must go

[1] *Poems*, p. 350. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 351.

Lonesome lek, whatever he had,
And lavin' the quality at it like mad,
And into the 'sarvatory, a place
Built on to the house, in a sort of a 'cess [recess].
They're keepin' feerins [ferns] there, and the lek of them.
And glass you know, and a sort of a frame——
Cucumbars? Well, you're makin' me laugh!
Cucumbars! What are you thinking of?
No! but a house as big as a shop,
And flowers goin' twistin' over the top
Inside and out; and no dung nor beddin'
The way with cucumbars; and spreadin'
Roundy lek, and glass I stated,
And most magnificent titervated.

So that's the place where the Dochtor came in
Just souljerin' [lounging] about, in saemin' [seemingly],
And rather dark in there I'm tould,
And nice and fresh, and a sort of a bowl,
And a spoot goin' skutin' the water up,
Only just a little sup,
But givin' a very pleasant sound,
Skutin' and drippin' all around.
Aw, a fuss-rate place! But its lek needn'
Be tellin' you what was the Docthor heedin'—
Ay, ay! you're right. Of course she was.[1]

Brown continues to tell how the rich doctor who had introduced Dr. Bell, the hero of the story, to Sir John was very jealous of his pupil, and so revenges himself in a most cowardly manner:—

[1] *Poems*, p. 354.

"Now, this dandy docthor I was talkin' about
Was jealous of Docthor Bell, no doubt—
Mortal! And no wondher, you'll say,
Bein' put out of the berth that way;
And watchin', watchin', like a cat,
And eyein' his chance—aw, mind you that!
And there that night, and took up a pogician,
As the bobby said, like a fellow fishin',
And calkerlatin' and dancin' the fly,
And fish about, but rather shy—
Just like I heard a preacher tell
The divil is fishin' in the dubs of hell—
Watchin'! the dirty thing! And took
The advantage of them two! Worse luck!
And crep', and crep', and saw them together,
And the kisses goin', and envyin' rather,
Aw, envyin', by gough! And away
To ould Sir John, which was hard at the play,
And *somethin' partickler*, and *wasn' able*
Just there, and got him from the table,
Swearin', though; and faith! he tould him!
Aw, then, the job was how to hold him!
And jumps like a lion shot at the hunter,
And '*Who?*' and '*What!*' and he'd go and affront
her—
Confront is it? All as one [all the same]—
And 'Make love to my daughter!' says Sir John,
And the mad he was he clane forgot to cuss.
And the people began to stare. But the dandy
Took him away, though, very handy
And into the 'sarvatory another road
And coaxin' him for the love of God,
To keep him quite [quiet]. And 'Be carm,' Sir
John, 'be carm!'
And scrunchin' the teeth, and just like barm—

Foamin'! And *her*, he was sayin' *her!*
And then—'Look there, Sir John, look there!'
Look there, indeed! Aw, the close! the close!
And the four lips makin' the one red rose—
Somethin' worth lookin' at, I'll swear!
Aw, a beautiful pair! a beautiful pair!
'Rascal! scoundrel! villain! thief!'
Aw, the rose was broke—aw, every leaf!
'Come out of that!' he says, and the string
Of his tongue was unloosened, and then full swing
The cusses come rollin' fair and free.
And, 'Is this your gratitude to me!
And you, Miss Madam! you! you! you!'
He was chokin' lek; but the poor girl flew
Like a freckened bird and in on the door—
The little one, I tould you afore—
And the dandy he got behind it, the way
She wouldn' see him! Aw, as good as a play!
But she did, and she gave him a look for all
That was fit to pin against the wall.
And he bowed very low, the sliddherin' snake—
A dirty divil, and no mistake.

And what did the Docthor do? What could he?
Answer him? Chut! It was well he kept studdy
[steady],
Aw, very studdy, and takin' his part,
But studdy, and takin' his part,
But studdy, except he gave a start
At somethin' the ould man said
About the young lady. Aw, then the head
Went up, and the eye was brought to the level,
And bedad the ould man had to be civil
For a bit, and backed, you see—the freckened

He was, . . .
And drawin' a one side, as if he meant
The Docthor to go. So the Docthor went."[1]

After his discovery, Sir John sends his daughter to the Continent. Her lover tries to find her, but does not succeed. Ill, broken-hearted, and indifferent, he goes to the Isle of Man, and lives at a small farm called the "Bigode." Whilst he is there a terrible plague of cholera breaks out in the Lhen. (This incident is in all probability a reference to the outbreak of cholera in the island in 1832.) The Doctor realizes that there is need of him in the village, and so goes and fights the plague. He himself takes the disease, but is nursed back to life by the daughter of the farmer with whom he lives. He finally marries her, and, being petitioned by the villagers, goes to live at the Lhen. He has three children—a boy and a girl who are very much petted by their mother, and a little girl much younger than the other two, who is tormented by her brother and sister and disregarded by her mother. The description of Kitty, the name of the youngest child, is one of the most beautiful to be found in the "Yarns." Her trust in Tom Baynes is the theme of some delicate lines; and her influence over her father forms a vivid picture that cannot fail to arouse our sympathy. Throughout the poem we feel sorry for the brilliant young doctor whose life has been one of sorrow and misfortune.

[1] *Poems*, p. 355.

As a character sketch the portrait of the Doctor is excellent in its profound knowledge of human life, in its vividity, and in its scholarly treatment. The Baronet who had driven the Doctor from his house dies, and his daughter writes to her former lover to say that she still loved him. The poet has seized this opportunity of expressing in verse the anguish that rends the Doctor's heart when he learns that his former sweetheart is unmarried and still loves him.

Years pass, and with them come the death of the Doctor's wife and the desertion of his two elder children. His love, deepened by these sorrows, turns to Kitty. With the help of the "Pazon" he educates her, and watches her grow to womanhood with all a father's pride and affection.

One day the "Docthor" is called to see a lady who is lying dangerously ill on board a yacht that has come into the bay:—

"The sun was settin' when we fetched,
And there was a lady lyin' stretched
On a bed on the deck, for she wouldn' stay
Below as long as it was day.
So that's the reason they satisfied her.
And the son, and the husband standin' beside her,
And the awin' furled, and the last bit of light
Shinin' full on her face—aw, the white! the white!
And 'Here's the Docthor!' and makin' room,
And the young man leaned his head on the boom;
But the old man took the Docthor's hand,
And led him to her, you understand—

But when she seen him she gave a cry,
And 'Oh, you're come to see me die!
O Edward! oh—perhaps it's as well—
O Edward Bell! O Edward Bell!'
And he fell on his knees, and he bowed his head,
'Harriet! Harriet!' he said;
But Lady Harriet was dead."[1]

A large part of the "Yarn" is devoted to Kitty, the heroine. She is pictured by the poet as a very gentle, pretty, timid child:—

"And all the sweet and all the wise
Blowin' out in two big eyes
As blue—and the little stalk of a body at her
Lek its put to a flower to hould it batthar [better]
Up to the sun, but stoops for all,
And hangs the head, and natheral:
For the sun is a bould thing anyway,
And bould enough, and coorse at the play—
But the little body, bless ye, the slandharst
You ever—like these polyanthars—
Convolv'lars—deep in the throat, you know,
And the honey guggling down below:
And the bumbees snugglin' there, and pokin'
Their nozzles in, and soakin', soakin' [sucking],
And clartin' [dirtying] their legs as sticky as glue;
And a pleasant sound they're makin' too—
And sip and sip—what they call egsthractin'—
Bless me! the pretty them critters is actin'!
But *bumbees—bumbees!* and in and out
And soakin'.—What am I talking about?

[1] *Poems*, p. 436.

Little Miss Katty! Ay! ay! ay!
Little Miss Katty. Aw, well I could cry
To think of that little thing—the forsaken
She was at them there."[1]

. . . . . .

"Aw, dear the little lonely thing,—
Just like a bird with a broken wing:
And lookin' up, and the little eye,
Lek axin' for it cannot fly."[2]

. . . . . .

"But poor little Kitty!
Bless me, the divil would have felt some pity
For that poor little craythur, that was natheral sweet
And good, the child! And the mother'd see't,
Ay, plain enough, but wouldn' regard,
And all the bad things she shouldn' have heard
She had to hear, and trimblin' then—
Aw, God is good to such, my men.
And angels puts their wings around
The lek of yandher, I'll be bound:
Aw, there's some sort of music playin' in them
That's got a power to defend them
And makin' that they're hardly knowin'
The sin and wickedness that's goin'."[3]

The picture is finished by the description of Kitty, grown up, coaxing the Doctor from his drunken habits:—

"Did ye ever hear?
No, but 'd play with him, and coax,
To get the bottle from him. And little jokes.

---

[1] *Poems*, p. 396. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 397. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 411.

And he'd reach out his hand, all shaky lek,
And she'd put her arms around his neck,
And kiss him, and laugh, and look in his face;
And all the little lovin' ways—
And the hand goin' fumblin'. And then, I'll be blowed,
If she wouldn' be shovin' a pipe in the road,
And grips and sucks, and it lighted at her
In a crack. And "No matter," he'd say, "No matter!"
Aw the grand ould man. And a bit of a smile,
And knew what she was up to all the while."[1]

The whole terminates with the marriage of Kitty to Misther Harry Combe, Lady Harriet's only son:—

"So you see the gel was just in her bloom;
And no chance but Misther Harry Combe
Would be seein' that—just a puffec [perfect] flower,
Lek the sun'll be shinin' after a shower,
Puffec, you know, in every part—
Aw, the little spot was in his heart
Afore he left the island—yes!
Chut! Bless your soul! he couldn' miss—
But didn' say a word, but back
The very next month!

. . . . . .

But, however, it come,
And not long about it, and axed her straight
Would she be after marryin' him.

. . . . . .

So I was taking a little sthrowl,
Bein' under orders to jine a ship
The very next day, and a longish trip,

[1] *Poems*, p. 440.

Tho' you never know, and—ay, man, ay!
Lek it would be a sort of good-bye--
So of coorse prentendin' not to know them,
But blest if they didn' call me to them,
And then they tould me the way it was,
And goin' to be married for Michaelmas."[1]

[1] *Poems*, p. 442.

CHAPTER XI.

"CHRISTMAS ROSE"—"MARY QUAYLE"—"BELLA GORRY."

"CHRISTMAS ROSE"—the story of a storm-child—is perhaps the most Manx, both in composition and idea, of any of the "Yarns." The poem opens with a wreck that cast upon the shore a baby girl:—

"It was light,
Broad day, when she parted amidships—'*All right!*'
Was the word, and '*Steady! all hands look out!*'
Then never a word till one gave a shout
And another, and hands were gript in a minute,
And I looked at the trough, and what was there in it
But a nigger swimmin' strong and hard
On his back! and a bundle—I didn' regard
What, but somethin' white, and the lift
Of the sea curled round him, and swep' it adrift;
And he turned on his face, and he made a bite
With his teeth, and he caught it, and held it as tight
As tight: and struck out, but rather slow,
Aw, a pluckier nigger I never saw;
No, nobody else—and pluck is pluck;
But whether it was his heart was bruck [broken]
With the strength of the sea, I cannot tell;
But when they got hold of him he fell

In their arms; and sure enough, he was dead!
Poor fellow! but what d'ye think he had
Clenched in his teeth that they had to cut
The tapes with a knife, they were that tight shut—
What but a little child?—a gel!
And livin' too! aw, well, well, well!
If you'd ha' heard the cheer, and the women cryin'
And runnin' and takin' their turn and tryin'
To warm it at their breasts, and rockin',
And doublin' themselves over it—well, it was shockin'!
And '*Go and tell the Pazon!*' such squealin';
But the Pazon was there already kneelin'
By the black man's side; and he'd got a book,
And workin' the rules,[1] and he wouldn' look
At the baby a bit, for he said, and he smiled—
'The women 'll be sure to look after the child.'"[2]

Notwithstanding all the efforts of Pazon Gale, the nigger never recovers consciousness. The question then is—what is to be done with the rescued baby? Finally, the Pazon takes her to the Vicarage, and soon becomes exceedingly fond of his adopted baby daughter:—

"And the Pazon loved her terrible.
I've seen him with her beside him a-sittin'
On the darkey's grave, and her a-gettin'
Daisies and that, and a-pokin' them straight
In his face, and him with the love and the light
And the strength and the strain of his soul's desire
All round the child like a glory of fire.

[1] Rules of the Royal Humane Society.
[2] *Poems*, p. 152.

Aw, it's the truth I tell ye—but I've heard them say
The misthress wasn' much that way.
She'd look middlin' sharp now and then at the pair,
And bite her thread with a wrench, and stare;
But quite [quiet]—aw quite! just hemmin' and hummin'
A bit—she was hard to make out—that woman."[1]

The "Pazon" has two sons of his own:—

"Now the Pazon had childher, George and James,
Sons the both, and that's the names."[2]

Both sons fall in love with Christmas Rose, and each in turn proposes. Neither of them does she favour. James, the younger of the two brothers, dies; George, who had long tried to suppress his love, knowing his brother's feelings, abandons himself to a wild career. Mrs. Gale, jealous of Christmas Rose, decides to upbraid her for her unfeeling conduct. Brown, in a cleverly-written conversation, graphically describes the way in which she takes Mrs. Lee into her confidence:—

"It wasn' only George and Rose,
But the Pazon! Well, you'll hardly suppose—
But the Pazon, I tell ye! gettin' too fond
Of Christmas! and *the carryin' on*--
And *never sundered* [separate], aw, as jealous
As the divil himself—and who blew the bellows
But Anthony's wife? And 'O Missis Gale!'
And 'Yes! Missis Gale; and 'No! Missis Gale,'

[1] *Poems*, p. 154. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 155.

And *'deed and 'deed* [indeed] *and scoffers would mock;*
And *what an example to the flock!*

. . . . . .

And the two of them made it up, I suppose,
To have it out with the Christmas Rose."[1]

The description that Brown gives of the row Mrs. Gale, backed by Mrs. Lee, had with Christmas Rose is certainly one of the finest psychological passages that he has written. Each feeling, as it passes through the minds of the three women, is portrayed in his lines:—

"But when she cried in that distress,
The Christmas flew like a bird to her breast
And clung and clung; and 'Mother dear,
Oh let me, let me, let me be here;
Mother! mother! oh be my mother!'
And Missis Gale gave a kind of a shudder—
'Oh I long for your love; oh if—oh if——'
But Missis Gale got very stiff—
'If I could always be like this!
Your child, your own! oh, one, *one* kiss'—
And the mawther gave her a little pat
Betwix' the shoulders, just like that!—
Coaxin' though—'O mother! mother!'
Says Christmas, 'George is a darling brother—
But more than that"—and she kind o' moan't—
'O mother! mother! oh don't! oh don't!
And—'Some other time,' she says, 'I'll try,'
Says the Christmas Rose, 'to tell you why.
But now!' she says, and she cuddled to her—
'I never was like this before!

[1] *Poems*, p. 201.

Love me, mother!' Aw, the Misthress's face,
Was a thing to see—and 'Listen!' she says—
'Will you have George? Oh, I'm goin' mad!
O Christmas! have him, for the love of God.'"[1]

. . . . . .

"'Be merciful!' she said, and bent
Her head again; but the woman meant
No mercy—no; 'Stand off!' she cried,
And all the rage and all the pride
And all the jealousy come tearin'
In one blast through her soul, like the way you're hearin'
A storm in the woods on a winter's day,
When the trees has no sap, and cranches away.
'Stand off! you viper!' she said: and *oh*,
If she'd only known this long ago,
'I'd have smothered her, I'd have smothered her
In her cradle!' she said—Missis Lee didn' stir,
But snivelin' lek—'I would,' she said;
'*Mother!* and *Mercy!*' and she spread
Her arms all wild—'Oh, I know your art;
And you've robbed me of my husband's heart!'
And then she went on, and ravin' and ravin'
That Misthress Lee thought it was time to be lavin'!"[2]

The weird manner in which Christmas Rose meets her death ends the poem and completes the poet's fanciful idea:—

"This is what happened to Christmas Rose.
It was harvest-time and terrible warm,
And me a-shearin' on the Sheargy farm;

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[1] *Poems*, p. 203. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 204.

And rather late givin' over though.
And home, and a good piece of road to go,
And takin' the shortest cut I could,
And crossin' a stream, and a bit of wood,
And out on the headlands over the bay,
And I saw a cloud very far away,
But comin', comin', bound to come,
And the deep, low growl of the thunder-drum;
And steady, steady, sollum, slow,
As if it knew where it had to go;
Comin', comin', like it would be
Comin', a purpose for somebody—
('Was it *them* that had the power
Gave to them in that dreadful hour?')
And low, rather low: then higher, higher,
Till it kissed the cairn with a kiss of fire—
Once—like the twinklin' of an eye—
Once—and the long back—suck and the sigh
Of the silence—terrible far away
Flash flashed to flash behind the sea:
And back and back till you couldn' see fuddher,
Like passing something to one another.
And—was it a sheep, or was it a flag,
That white spot on the Belfry crag?
I couldn' tell and wondhering,
And up through the goss and up through the ling
As quick—it was her! it was her! Yes! yes!
Dead though, dead, and gript in her fist
A bunch of bluebells that was growin' there,
And sea-pinks twisted through her hair:
And never a spot and never a speck
But just a black mark under her neck."[1]

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[1] *Poems*, "Christmas Rose," p. 208. (Complete Edition.)

Thus Christmas Rose, the adopted daughter of Pazon Gale, dies by the side of the sea, from which she was originally rescued.

The "Yarn" contains more than one example of Brown's many-sidedness. Though he delights when he finds a saint, such as Pazon Gale, and does him all the honour he can, he is too truthful a writer to hide the little worries of family life. The few lines that describe the arrival of the Pazon and Mrs. Gale in their gig give an amusing account of the real state of things between the loving old clergyman and his wife:—

"Well, up come the Pazon at last—no doubt
This time, and helpin' the Misthress out,
Very lovin', and a-givin' a scrape
Of her skinny ould leg agin' the step—
And 'Oh, Misther Gale!' and 'How awkard ye are!'
And him a fussin' and—'Well, I declare!'
And 'I beg your pardin!' Bless me, the perlite!
And Jinny dodgin' about with a light;
And me with ould Smiler's nose in my hand,
The horse that was at them, you'll understand,
And laughin' like fun: and George goin' nudgin'
With his elber the way it was time to be trudgin."[1]

In this poem, more than in his others, Brown is exceedingly clever in description. A few words and some idea, object, or sensation stands out in brilliant relief. He achieves his end, either by a

[1] *Poems*, p. 187.

striking simile, by a choice of words from his enormous vocabulary, or simply by his genius. His first method is to be found in his description of the rusty pump:—

"And I remember the jump
He gave when he heard the jerk of the pump,
Thinkin' the Pazon had come in
Unknownst at the back! And bless me! the din
There was at that pump; and apt to run dry
And bad for the soak, and never say die!
But work away!—aw, a regular brute!
And a rusty boult that roored like the hoot
Of a owl or a dunkey; and suckin' and sobbin'
And retchin' and cretchin', and slibbin' and slobbin'.
It's lek, you know, how a hoss is goin'
When his wind is broke, and ah-in' and oh-in'
That's bad."[1]

A good example of his power to portray vividly a picture of a well-known object, simply by his choice and arrangement of words, is the way he describes Don Quixote:—

"And the name they had to it was Don Quixote,
A sort of a Punch-and-Judy, or the way
The Whiteboys [mummers] is actin' a Christmas day—
Imp'rint craythurs! and Rosinante,
A skinny ould hoss that he had; and a banty
Fat little beggar called Sancho tha't got
For a governor—ay! Don Quixote!

---

[1] *Poems*, p. 182.

And his shield and all the ould iron he wore—
Well the quality's—but I said that afore.
And the picthers raely is funny amazin'—
Bless me! the barber and the bason!
And him agate o' the windmills—ay!
But I'll be showin' ye by-and-by."[1]

"MARY QUAYLE."

The curate's story is in English. It is a pretty love tale with no very deep thoughts running through it. There are pretty passages, but the whole is rather overwrought; the ideas are rather too emphatic to catch the public taste. Brown has here given proof of his versatile genius in changing from the "asynartete octosyallables" of Tom Baynes to the "pseudo-dochmiacs" of the young Oxonian. There are several apt similes to be found in the poem, and nature is described in a poetical manner. Take, for instance, the picture of Mary Quayle as she was to her two brothers:—

"She was the loveliest thing they'd ever known:
She was the youngest of them, she had grown
Among them like a flower among the corn—
So, from the very minute she was born
They loved their little sister. And to them
The flower that drooped, and faded on the stem,
Was still their flower; the lightning-flash had
scathed it
And scorched the tender leaves, and so they bathed it

[1] *Poems*, p. 200.

With dews of love, and every sweet endeavour—
She was as beautiful to them as ever,
And twice more precious for her sorrow's need—
So God is gentle to the bruised reed.
Besides, they hoped for sunshine by-and-by.
If only they could coax her not to die.
No score but time will wipe it with his sponge—
Too much to lose, they thought; so divers think and plunge."[1]

One or two lines will suffice to give an idea of Brown's description of Nature in this poem:—

"I saw the smoke
Rise from the roofs; the birds began their hymns,
And all the valley seemed to stretch its limbs
And wake."[2]

The description of a stretch of pure sky between two thunder-clouds is equally beautiful:—

"Lo! a breach
Of purest sky, seaward, diagonal
From north to south: on either side, a wall
Black, feather-edged with sheen of silvery bars,
And in the interspace were many stars."

The likening of the dying of the thunder-wind to a sigh is also original and pleasing:—

"Whereat a sigh
Came trembling to our feet, then paused, as failing
Against the rock, then fluttered into wailing,
And wheeled adown the farthest bourn of west."[4]

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[1] *Poems*, "Mary Quayle," p. 626. (Complete Edition.)
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 630. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 632. [4] *Ibid.*, p. 634.

"BELLA GORRY."

The Pazon's story is written in English blank verse. The story itself is a graceful tale of a mother's love told by an evangelical clergyman of the old school, with a correctness of style and thought that raises the whole tone of the poem. The author himself regarded this poem as "rather good,"[1] and had the intention of writing more Pazon's stories. Brown seems to imitate Tennyson, distantly and without much enthusiasm in this story; but Tennyson has never told a tale of such reality as "Bella Gorry."

"He could never have told such a story, because, in despite of 'Rizpah,' he was never interested in maternity; but only in the processes, charming or not, by which maternity becomes possible. Brown, however, has done the thing: 'Nursing the baby!' So Parson Gale: for all time: and has done it in verse which in its languid intolerance of difficulties, while entirely self-sufficing, is by no means a bad criticism of Tennyson's own."[2]

There are only two other "Yarns"—"The Schoolmasters," a short poem on Manx character, whose plot might be summed up in the proverb—"All is not gold that glitters"; and "Job the

[1] *Letters*, vol. i. p. 183. To S. T. Irwin (April 21st, 1893).

[2] Article on "T. E. Brown," by W. E. Henley. *Pall Mall Magazine*, vol. xxii. p. 584.

White," the continuation of the "Manx Witch." It has Misthress Banks' idiot son as its principal character. This "Yarn" was one of Brown's latest efforts, and there is a marked difference between it and the earlier poems of the series. The tone is more philosophical, and the story is tinged with a hopeful sadness that is the outcome of a perfect trust in God. These, with "Peggy's Wedding," "In the Coach," and the half-English, half-Manx "Mater Dolorosa," complete all his work in dialect; the rest of the volume is filled with short poems, sonnets, and lyrics in English verse, that reflect one of the most unique personalities in the roll of our literature.

Brown stands as a critic of his age; he regretfully contemplates the full-blooded generations of the past, in a bitter contrast to the palsied and irresolute race that he sees in the future. Dreading that the continuity of Manx life may be broken by a lapse in the traditions, he sets himself truthfully to paint the old-time life of his countrymen, in colours that will not fade. In order to perform his task with complete perfectness, he clothed his "Yarns" in Manx dialect, and has, therefore, missed his mark with the public, who mistook him for a rustic singer or an imperfectly educated countryman. "What ought I to do?" he demands. "Shall I put on my next title-page, 'Late Fellow of Oriel, etc.'? or am I always to abide under this ironic cloak of rusticity?" This was no mere craving for popularity, no

wish for personal recognition, such as we find in Hawker—

"I would not be forgotten in this land";[1]

but a longing to join the past with the present and the future of his beloved island. Every inch of his native land was loved by him; as were its people. Nobody knew them better than he; none could criticize them with the same frankness tinged with passionate love. He showed up their weakness at times, with almost severe correction, yet was loved by them, and he loved them. In everything he found something to love and admire; something to laugh at, something to laugh with.

Man and nature, nature and man romantically and humorously considered are his theme. He took them as God made them; he liked human character as he found it—not altogether good nor wholly bad; but as it was revealed to him in the breathing, sentient, passionate environment of the island in which he was born. If he sometimes sunk to the depths of poignant emotion—and he was not averse from "wallowing naked in the pathetic"—his artistic feelings, and, above all, his keen sense of humour—the overflowing of a wild, boyish appreciation of fun, and the outcome of great, genial, healthy good spirits—quickly recalled him to the unending comedy of life, and prevented him from an excess of self-revelation. His humour,

[1] "The Quest of the Sangraal," by R. S. Hawker.

like that of Aristophanes, Cervantes, Rabelais, Shakespeare, and Swift, was the outcome of his perfect knowledge of human life. He writes from personal knowledge, and does not serve up echoes. He loves to live, and share, with a far-reaching, inextinguishable love, the pains and joys of his fellow-creatures.

"The 'Yarns' are rich as life itself, in character, emotion, experience, tragedy, farce, comedy, fact; and there is none of their innumerable details but is presented with an assurance, an understanding of essentials, a mastery of means that stamp its presentation as literature."[1]

The poetry of Spenser and Keats is a continuous succession of magnificent frescoes, welded into one lovely whole by lofty thought; Tennyson's work is a collection of delicate visions. These poets render the portraiture of life too noble; they take away from it its reality of action and continuity of progress. Shakespeare and Browning drew pictures that are more true to human nature; but they at times leave the path of accurate description to introduce fanciful ideas and purely artistic passages.

Brown resembles these latter two, but his sense of real value and relation of things made him depict life as it is, and if he lapses into philosophical or fanciful ideas they arise directly from his subject. His great scholarship, love of music, and Celtic instinct of colours enabled him to treat human

[1] Introduction to the *Collected Works of T. E. Brown*, by W. E. Henley, p. 17.

character with brilliant detail, grace of movement, and harmonious proportion that make his "Yarns" the "only words in the only order" which is the most authentic test of true poetry.

"Once," says Mr. Irwin, "when I remarked on the omission of his name in an article on 'Minor Poets' in one of the magazines, he said, with a smile, 'Perhaps I am among the major!'"[1]

Was that smile ironical?

[1] Introductory Memoir to the *Letters*, p. 12.

CHAPTER XII.

BROWN'S SHORT POEMS—BROWN'S TREATMENT OF NATURE—BROWN'S BELIEF IN GOD.

If one of the chief characteristics of the "Yarns" is the Chaucerian sense of fun that pervades the tales, a distinguishing mark of Brown's shorter English poems is the poignant—at times agonizing—pathos that they embrace. Sometimes it was the joy echoing in the Minor,[1]—at others, the honest outpouring of a strong, hearty man, that recalls to us his own words, "I am a born sobber."[2] His literary good manners prevented him from descending to the deepest mines of wailing and woe, but on occasions it must be confessed that he 'wallowed.' So did Shakespeare, so did Dickens, so did Scott. Stevenson did not, because he knew his talent as a runner knows his pace, or a batsman his best hit; but surely it is no disgrace to follow Dickens, Scott, and Shakespeare rather than Stevenson.

It is no whining, peevish, whimpering wail that

[1] "Sad, sad," p. 649.

[2] *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 116. To H. F. Brown (August 25th 1895).

we find in "Aber Stations"; nor the pretended wound or acted distress that is evident in "Sunset at Chagford"; and how he was able by his delicate, intuitive sympathy to enter into the anguish of others stands recorded in "Mater Dolorosa":—

"Aw Billy, good sowl! don't cuss! don't cuss!
Ye see, these angels is grand to nuss!
And it's lek, they're feeding them, on some nice air,
Or dew or the lek, that's handy there—
O Billy, look at my poor, poor bress;
O Billy, see the full it is!
But . . . O my God! . . . but navar mind!
There's no doubt them sperrits is very kind—
And of course they're that beautiful—its lekly
The childer is takin' to them directly—
Eh, Billy, eh? . . . And . . . O my head!
Billy, Billy, come to bed!
And the little things that navar knew sin—
And everything as nate as a pin:
And the lovely bells going ding-a-lingin',
And of coorse we've allis heard of their singin',
But won't he want me when he'll be wakin'?
Will they take him up when he's wantin' takin'?
I hope he'll not be left in the dark—
He was allis used to make a wark
If a body'd lave him the smallest minute—
Dear me! the little linnet—
But I forgot—it's allis light
In yandar place. . . . All right, all right!
I forgot, ye see, . . . I am not very well—
Light, was I saying? but who can tell?
Bad for the eyes, though, . . . but a little curtain
On a string, ye know—aw certain! certain!

Let me feel your face, Billy! Jus' us two!
Aw, Billy, the sorry I am for you!
Aw, 'deed it is, Billy—very disthressing!
To lave your childher to another pessin'—
But . . . all the little rooms that's theer—
And Jesus walkin' up the steer,
And tappin' lek—I see! I see—
O Jesus Christ have pity on me!
But He'll come—He'll come!—He'll give a look
Jus' to see the care that's took—
Oh! ther's no doubt He's very gud—
Oh I think He wud, I think He wud!
But still, . . . but still, . . . but I don't know,
O Billy! I think I'd like to go—
What's that, Billy? Did ye hear a cry?
O Illiam, the sweet it'd be to die!"[1]

Only some forty lines of essentials, and the effect is complete. The cry, half articulate, of a woman with her true time gone for nothing—the wail of her baffled senses—clamant.[2] Such a picture is not to be found outside Brown's works. It is strange that he who, in his own words, would fain write "one poor story of about five, not more than ten, pages that the world would not willingly let die,"[3] did not realize that he had achieved his aim in the verses that have just been quoted.

If we find in the "Yarns" all the Manxman in Brown—all his love, blame, and fear for his country-

[1] *Poems*, p. 31. "Mater Dolorosa."

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 12. Introduction.

[3] *Letters*, vol. i. p. 220. To T. C. Tarver (October 24th, 1893).

men—in his sonnets and lyrics we have an insight into his inner self; the self inaccessible to his acquaintances, undisturbed by outside shocks; the self that explains the seeming inconsistencies of his character; the self that made it possible for one of his friends to say, "There is no getting to the end of Brown."

From these few words it will be seen that he was a subjective writer. His shorter poems are full of deep philosophical thought; not the exposition of a new philosophy or the definition of an individual discovery, but of the goodness of God and the beauty of Nature. What he did in his strong, characteristic way was to lay stress on the marrow of life, and plead for charity in men's dealings with men: "His poetry is the poetry of a strong and tender and reverent man, whose piety was as simple as that of George Herbert, and whose literary art and power over words were of the highest."[1] Applying Carlyle's words, "There can be no doubt but many men have been named and printed great who were vastly smaller than he."

Though pathos predominates in his shorter poems, Brown was not unhappy. He regretted the past, and looked diligently for the truth, but was never overcome by doubt. The reason probably was his firm conviction in his belief that "life is continuous."[2] He himself defines for us

[1] *Academy*, November 6th, 1897.

[2] *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 138. To S. T. Irwin (November 10th, 1895).

his idea of pathos in a letter that he wrote to Mr. Irwin—"What is the exact ground of the pathos? Is it not the consciousness that, by using this classical form of speech, we tread in sacred footsteps; that all the ages are one, linked each to each by natural piety; that it appeals to scholars like a Masonic symbol, reminding us that we are a brotherhood—yes, more than a Masonic—a true φρατρία?"[1]

Mr. Irwin tells us that in one of his sermons Brown said—"Those who have been, and are the great amongst us are those who have dwelt most reverently, or at least most habitually, under the shadow of the sky-pointing pyramids of the past."[2] This conviction led the poet to try and study ancient literature from the point of view of those for whom it was written.

In one of his letters to J. R. Mozley, we see how he tried to realize the feelings of a dying Greek; but, subjectively—"I want to know what the Greek religion did for a man in the exigencies of life and death. A Greek deathbed other than that of Socrates—the equivalent, if any, of the clergyman —the pious friend, the whole scene with its lights and shades—the anxieties, the consolations—that is the one direction in which my mind wanders and scrutinizes. You know my conviction, that Greek life was not so far removed from our life—that all

[1] *Letters*, vol. i. p. 133. To Rev. E. M. Kissack (August 7th, 1888).

[2] Introductory Memoir, p. 43.

human life is homogeneous, and that the 'Einkleidung' is of much the same texture, however the colour and other accidents may differ. A dear, good old Greek dying, 'in sure and certain hope' of something—I believe in that Greek profoundly."[1] He carries out the same idea in his poem "Israel and Hellas"; and though the verses contain a doubt, the poet concludes that the difference of their creed made the Greeks the strong, progressive race that they were:—

"Yet if the Greek went straighter to his aim,
If knowing wholly what he meant to do,
He did it, given circumstance the same,
Or near the same, then must I hold it true
That from his different creed the vantage came,
Who, seizing one world, where we balance two,
From its great secular heart the readier current drew."[2]

Brown was also influenced by the Italian school. He tells that he read Petrarch in order to place his mind in the environment of the fourteenth century:—

"It is a great fad of mine, to try luck upon the things our forefathers liked—the books, one might say, that formed them. Of course I mean *the* books. Now one sees everywhere what a person

[1] *Letters*, vol. I. p. 135. To J. R. Mozley (August 20th 1889).

[2] *Poems*, "Israel and Hellas," p. 730.

Petrarch has been! What an influence! Wherever I see this kind of thing, I set myself diligently to realize it. I will not permit the fraction of a doubt as to the justice of their admiration. I believe implicitly that our forbears were not fools, and that they knew what they were about. I begin, therefore, by defying all carpers and sneerers who would tell me that Petrarch was artificial and so forth. There must be more in the matter than this. The results are always most satisfactory. I have succeeded by constant, *patient* reading of the '*Rime*' in tuning my mind to the pitch of *circiter* 1350. I mean, of course, to the point of reading the poems with the *bona fides*, sympathy, and surrender which it is quite certain the men of his own time readily granted Petrarch, and which for centuries afterwards this noble poet obtained at the hands of the ingenuous. This is a great thing to gain, if but for a moment—a Pisgah-glimpse of retrospective vision."[1]

Touches of Italian thought are to be found in many of his poems, but nowhere is it in such evidence as in the verses in which he extols the women of Rome. In "Roman Women" he riots in his manhood. Brown had passed through the Eternal City with his quick observant, loving eyes, ready to catch the pulse of the past in the life of the present. Here he saw the lowly matron, there the merry maid—some austere, some gay; but all

[1] *Letters*, vol. i. p. 113. To Hastings Crossley (December 29th, 1885).

had his quick sympathy. This poem quivers "with virility, and the gustiness of a blithe, masculine, Northern nature, quickened by a Southern sun. The only poet to compare with the author of this sequence is Walt Whitman. There is, indeed, more than a hint of Whitman—of Whitman confined within limits, Whitman concentrated."[1]

The poet continues with two stanzas in which he praises the women of Italy's capital as they have never been extolled before:—

"Good wife, good mother—Yes, I know,
But what a glow
Of elemental fires!
What breath, what stately flow
Of absolute desires—
How bound
To household task
And daily round
It boots not ask!

Good mother and good wife—
These women seem to live suspended life.
As lakes, dark-gleaming till the night is done,
Expect the sun,
So these,
That wont to hold Love's offspring on their knees,
Take current odds,
Accept life's lees,
And wait returning Gods."[2]

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[1] *Academy*, 13th November 1897.

[2] *Poems*, "Roman Women," p. 62.

The South speaks to the North, the Latin to the Teuton, in a musical dialogue that lingers in the mind with a pleasing persistency:—

"'You seem so strange to me,
You merman from the Northern Sea'—
'A barnacle from Noah's Ark?'
'Well—yes—a sort of shark!'
'Ah, blow then, darling blow!
Blow in my ears, and let the warm breath flow,
And search the inmost vault
Of my sad brain. Blow, love—
Blow *in* cooing of the dove,
Blow *out* the singing of the salt!'"[1]

Brown's whole nature was a "full-stringed instrument tuned to respond to any note that was sounded in the vicinity."[2] He, nevertheless, had a strong personality of his own, and refused to depart from his convictions to gratify the whims or wishes of his friends. He gives an amusingly pathetic expression of this characteristic in his poem entitled "Social Science":—

"O happy souls that mingle with your kind,
That laugh with laughers, weep with weepers,
Whom use gregarious to your like can bind,
Who sow with sowers, reap with reapers!

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[1] *Poems*, "Roman Women," p. 64.

[2] Article on "Brown," by J. C. Tarver. *Macmillan's Magazine*, October 1900, p. 406.

To me it is not known,
The gentle heart to moan
With moaners, wake with wakers, sleep with
sleepers.

It must be good to think the common thought,
To learn with learners, teach with teachers;
To hold the adjusted soul till it is brought
To pray with prayers, preach with preachers,
But I can never catch
The dominant mode, nor match
The tone, and whine with whiners, screech with
screechers.

. . . . . .

Thus spake I once, with fierce self-gratulation,
Nor hoped with hopers, feared with fearers;
Yet, discontent, it seemed a mere privation
To doubt with doubters, sneer with sneerers;
It seemed more happiness
A brother's hand to press,
To talk with talkers, hear with hearers.

Wherefore, albeit I know it is not great,
Mobbing with mobs, believing with believers,
Yet for the most it is a snugger state
To gain with gainers, grieve with grievers,
Than, desolate on a peak,
To whet one's lonely beak,
And watch the beaver huddling with the beavers.

But though this boon denied, my soul, love thou
The lover, gibe not with the giber!
O ragged soul! I cannot pierce thee now,
That, thread to thread, and fibre unto fibre

Thou with another soul
Shouldst make a sentient whole;
But I am proud thou dost retain
Some tinct of that imperial *murex* grain
No carrack ever bore to Thames or Tiber."[1]

It has been well said that Brown is an "Impressionist."[2] Any lack of technique that is to be discovered in his work is entirely obliterated by his method of giving the aspect that most appealed to him, without clogging the description with manifold details. We may take as the best example of his method the lovely mystic picture of the Bristol Channel:—

"The sea was Lazarus, all day
At Dives' gate he lay,
And lapped the crumbs.
Night comes;
The beggar dies—
Forthwith the Channel—coast to coast
Is Abraham's bosom; and the beggar lies
A lovely ghost."[3]

These few lines, that contain just what is necessary for the fancy, convey to the ordinary reader an enchanted scene; but for those who have seen the Bristol Channel by night and day, their beauty is enhanced a thousandfold. Will such ever look

[1] *Poems*, "Social Science," p. 735.
[2] "Occasional Papers," August 1905.
[3] *Poems:* Clevedon Verses, "Bristol Channel," p. 662.

upon the waters that flow past the Holmes without thinking of these lines? Another example is the artistic impression he gives us of a schooner which

> "An hour ago
> Was lying hoggish at the quay,"

and now lies westward, far at sea, in the gentle light of a summer sunset.

> "And, now, behold! a shadow of repose
> Upon the line of grey
> She sleeps, that transverse cuts the evening rose,
> She sleeps and dreams away,
> Soft-blended in a unity of rest
> All jars, and strifes obscene, and turbulent throes
> 'Neath the broad benediction of the West—
>
> "Sleeps; methinks she changes as she sleeps
> And dies, and is a spirit pure.
> Lo! on her deck an angel pilot keeps
> His lonely watch secure;
> And at the entrance of heaven's dockyard waits,
> Till from night's leash the fire-breath'd morning leaps,
> And the strong hand within unbars the gates."[1]

Impressionism of another character is to be found in his poem called "Vespers." Here it is not a scene of Nature that is to be treated by the poet, but the thought that came into his mind on hearing a blackbird:—

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[1] *Poems*, "The Schooner," p. 697.

"O Blackbird, what a boy you are!
How you do go it!
Blowing your bugle to that one sweet star—
How you do blow it!
And does she hear you, blackbird boy, so far?
Or is it wasted breath?
'Good Lord! She is so bright
To-night!'
The blackbird saith."[1]

Here we have, linked to the careless schoolboy phraseology that would readily enter the mind of the schoolmaster as he was taking his evening stroll, the sad thought of our insignificance, of the futility of thinking that all is within our reach. But he brightens this humble fact by showing the joy to be obtained in striving for things above us:—

"'Good Lord! She is so bright
To-night!'
The blackbird saith."

BROWN'S TREATMENT OF NATURE.

"There was something, too," said Mr. Irwin, "which seemed to separate him from other men, in the kind and degree of his sympathy with external nature."[2]

We can gather from his letters that he was himself conscious of this power. Writing to Mr.

[1] *Poems*, "Vespers," p. 689.

[2] Introductory Memoir, p. 37.

Dakyns, he says:—"I hadn't gone far until the highest power which I ever gain swooped down upon me. I mean the power of sucking out from the country its inmost soul, and making it stand before me and smile and speak."[1]

There was something mystic in his attachment to Nature—he possessed, as one of his friends said, "Some great secret of Nature which he was not free to impart to us."[2] His treatment is more real and personal than was that of Goldsmith. He has a Wordsworthian interest in all that belongs to Nature, and rivals Scott in vividness of natural description and colouring. Take as an example his painting of the Lynton Vales in summer:—

"O, it is great,
That strip of Channel sea,
Backed with the prime of English Arcady!
It is not that the heather rushes
In mad, tumultuous flushes—
(*Trickling's* the word I'd use)—
But O, the greens and blues
And brown, whereon the crimson dwells;
The buds, the bells;
The drops from arch to arch
Of pine and larch;
The scented glooms where soft sun-fainting culvers
Elude the eye,
And foxgloves, like innumerous-celled revolvers,
Shoot honey-tongued quintessence of July!"[3]

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[1] *Letters*, vol. i. p. 193. May 21st, 1893.

[2] Introductory Memoir, p. 37.

[3] *Poems*, "Lynton Verses," p. 666.

This rest in Nature is also to be found in his earliest efforts, as will be seen from the unnamed, unpublished poem which, by the kindness of his sister (Mrs. Williamson) the author is enabled to quote:—

"O night of purity and peace,
How sweet to rest with thee,
When yielding cares my heart release,
And set my spirit free.

The Sun's last lingering kiss has prest
Yon mountain's stately brow;
Then fold me to thy soft, soft breast,
Let's weep together now.

O, a merry fellow is the Sun,
With his face of sparkling glee;
And he clasps in his arms the world he's won—
Oh, a merry fellow is he.

But soon he grows tired of her smiling charms,
Soon leaves his mourning bride,
For the cloud nymphs woo him to their arms,
Beyond the Western tide.

Then let me breathe thy gentle breath,
Gaze on thy face of calm,
And drink 'mid silence as of death
The whisperings of balm.

Come with the meek, the pensive mien,
That I so love to see;
And we will talk of what has been
And what is yet to be.

Oh! blessings on the little stars,
That look so meek above,
And shed through my soul's prison bars
The silvery light of love.

My soul is like a mountain stream
That ever shuns the day,
But mirrored in its depths ye seem
To kiss my grief away.

Say, are ye listening to the Moon,
Ye stars so bright and living,
As she sings in her old and quiet tune
Some happy song of heaven?

Why laugh ye so, ye merry ones?
So say ye, should not be;
Blend ye with her's your softened tones
And sing ye all to me.

But let it be a tranquil strain
Of high and pure delight,
And I will sing it you again
As I lie in the arms of night.

A blessing, Luna, too, on thee
With the fixed, the tender glance,
For thou didst seem to pity me,
And all my dark mischance.

The floods of chastened glory stream
From off thy golden hair,
And light, with mild and soothing gleam,
The sea of wild despair.

Now, like a big rich amber drop
On the East's warm bosom swelling,
Now, like the Virgin's eye wherefrom
Love thoughts are ever welling.

Now, hiding in the mists dark pall,
I see thy trembling fear,
Now, from the cloud-fringed eyelid fall
In semblance of a tear.

And now, methinks, thou art a fair-haired child,
Who steeps the hard heart of a sire undone
In baths of tenderness, or mother mild,
Who mourns the errors of her first-born son.

And yet thy gaze to me is bliss,
And solemn ecstasy,
I scarcely think I could transgress
When thou art in the sky.

Oh, give me but thy girdle bright
To bind around my soul,
And then I cannot but do right
Beneath thy blest control.

And when by furious passion stirred,
My heart with madness rings,
Then I've thy voice (angelic / peaceful) heard
And whisper better things."[1]

The personification of Nature, the imagination of life in objects so magnificent and grand as the Jungfrau is common to everybody; but it would be

[1] For other unpublished poems, *vide* Appendix I.

difficult to find a more poetical expression of this sentiment than the passage in Brown's letter to his sister, in which he describes this Alpine mountain as seen from Mürren:—

"This glorious creature is your one object of interest from morning to night. It seems so near that you could fancy a stone might be thrown across to it. Between you and it is a broad valley; but so deep, and with sides so precipitous, that it is entirely out of sight. So the Jungfrau *vis-â-vis-es* you frankly, through the bright, sweet intervening air. And then she has such moods, such unutterable smiles, such inscrutable sulks, such growls of rage suppressed, such thunder of avalanches, such crowns of stars.

"One evening our sunset was real rose-pink you have heard of so much. It fades, you know, into a deathlike chalk-white. That is the most *awful* thing. A sort of spasm seems to come over her face, and in an instant she is a corpse, rigid, and oh, so cold! Well, so she died, and you felt as if a great soul had ebbed away into the Heaven of Heavens; and thankful but sad I went up to my room. I was reading by candle-light, for it gets dark immediately after sunset, when A (his wife was with him) shrieked to me to come to the window. What a Resurrection—so gentle, so tender, like that sonnet of Milton's about his dead wife returning in vision! The moon had risen; and there was the Jungfrau—O chaste, O blessed saint

in glory everlasting! Then all the elemental spirits that haunt crevasses, and hover around peaks, all the patient powers that bear up the rock buttresses and labour to sustain great slopes, all streams, and drifts, and flowers, and vapours, made a symphony, a time most solemn and rapturous. It was there, unheard perhaps—unheard, I will not deny it; but there, nevertheless. . . . Forgive my rhapsody; but, you know, you don't get these things twice. And let me just say one word of what followed. The abyss below was a pot of boiling blackness, and on to this and down into this, and all over this, the moonlight fell as meal falls on to porridge from nimbly sifting fingers. Moon meal! that was it."[1]

Many of his poems contain the same idea; take the lines in which he expresses his sadness, almost sorrow, for the short-lived Irish burn:—

"I saw a little stream to-day
That sprang right away
From the cornice of rock—
Sprang like a deer, not slid;
And the Tritons to mock—
Old dissolute Tritons—'Hurroo!'
They said; 'We'll teach him a thing or two,
This upland babe.' And I've no doubt they did.
But as he lightly fell, midway
His robe of bright spray

[1] *Letters*, vol. i. p. 75. To Mrs. Williamson (October 18th, 1874).

He flung in my face,
Then down to the soles and the cods
With his sweet young grace.
Ah, what will the stripling learn,
From those rude mates—that mountain burn,
What manners of th' extremely early gods?"[1]

Another example is his description of a bough of May:—

"I bended unto me a bough of May—
That I might see and smell;
It bore it in a sort of way,
It bore it very well,
But, when I let it backward sway
Then it were hard to tell
With what a toss, with what a swing,
The dainty thing
Resumed its proper level,
And sent me to the devil.
I know it did.—You doubt it?
I turned, and saw them whispering about it."[2]

The second noticeable point in Brown's treatment of Nature is the silent and peaceful aspect under which he presents her to us. His letters and poems give us the idea that his spirit has entered Nature's domain, to the exclusion of all external and irrelevant objects.

Writing of the Rigi, he gives expression to this thought:—

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[1] *Poems*, "Gob-ny-ushtey," p. 52.

[2] *Ibid.*, "I bended unto me," p. 689.

"Last night, the Rigi started up uneasily, about every other second in a restless glare of most lovely lightning. There was no thunder, a silent shimmering dirge. . . . The lake was very quiet —only from time to time, there passed over it towards me, the softest imaginable shudder, and the moon between two stars sat just above the Rigi."[1]

In another place, he expresses the same thought, though his touch is sadder. It must be conceded that Brown's whole treatment of Nature is tinged with a tender melancholy.

There was a sweetness to Brown, in the sadness of Nature: as is to be seen in these few lines, taken from a letter he wrote whilst at the Lakes:— "We have just had our last row on the lake. We left it jet, and steel, and gold. How sad it is! I can't affect to be otherwise than wretched. I do believe your autumns are the very soul of the lake year; and I am always forced to go away, just as the intensity of the sweetness begins to deepen to its acme."[2] Or in the mere "Lyrical sigh":—

"Weary wind of the West
Over the billowy sea—
Come to my heart, and rest!
Ah, rest with me!

---

[1] *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 247. To E. M. Oakley (July 21st, 1881).

[2] *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 97. To H. R. King (September 14th. 1881).

Come from the distance dim
  Bearing the sun's last sigh:
I hear thee sobbing for him
  Through all the sky.

So the wind came
  Purpling the middle sea,
Crisping the ripples of flame—
  Came unto me:
Came with a rush to the shore,
  Came with a bound to the hill,
Fell, and died at my feet—
  Then all was still."[1]

The sea finds a special place in Brown's works. Even in his childish days his little cares were "healed the while with balm of rock and sea."[2] On his return to the Island in 1892, he writes:—"Well, I fancy it is like the boisterous welcome of some great dog—at least, I take it in that sense. And the old boy is so strong, and he doesn't know, he thinks that I am what I used to be. But I'm not: and every now and then he remembers that, and creeps to my feet so fawningly."[3]

The situation of his early home, and his inborn love of Nature, caused him to choose "The Cliffs

[1] *Poems*, Song, p. 673.

[2] *Ibid.*, "Braddan Vicarage," p. 3.

[3] *Letters*, vol. i. p. 159. To G. H. Wollaston (September 25th, 1892).

at Bradda" as the subject of one of his earlier unpublished poems:—

"On Bradda's heights I took my stand,
And watched the blue waves as they toiled below,
And saw how they bounded upon the strand
And bent their proud crests of the riven snow.

Onward they came, and one by one
Flat on the sounding beach they fell.
And others sprang up at their dying groan;
And wildly they rang the funeral knell.

And ever as died a weary wave,
On the welcome couch of the pebbly shore,
Another swept o'er the new-made grave,
And held the place that he held before.

'Oh! such the fate of Man,' I cried.
Roughly he rolls on Time's wide sea,
And borne on the rush of the running tide,
Breaks on the shore of Eternity.

And another laughs, where he hath laughed,
And another weeps, where he hath wept;
And the golden bowl of Life is quaffed,
And the silvery cords of his harp have slept.

Away the mist from off that gloomy brow,
Proud Bradda, rival of the wrestling [reckless] storm,
Tear from the mossy [lofty] head the cloud-cap now,
And give me all revealed thy giant form.

Lord of the tempest—despot of the wave—
That dies, its white teeth gnashing at thy feet,
Art thou the stone that marks the ages' grave
Reared by some mighty hand in Time's wide street?

Yea! I can read [trace] the annals of the Past
Graven on thy bare breast with an iron pen,
That trembled in the fingers of the blast,
And wrote of Times that were—that ne'er shall be again.

And while I gaze upon thy summit hoar
That tow'rs as though to seek some other clime,
With thee my trembling spirit seems to soar,
And hears soft echoes of the olden Time.

But *thou* shalt last, and when the weary years
Have sought the bosom of Eternity,
And borne me far beyond the circling spheres,
Thou shalt look on, proud cliff, unmovedly.
Ay! when this dust the earth-worm's food shall be
Thou still shall stand and frown along the heaving sea."[1]

In his published poems we have an example, more striking in its originality, of the inspiration he drew from cliffs:—

"I have seen cliffs that met the ocean foe
As the black bison, with its crouching front
And neck back-coiled, awaits the yelping hunt
That reck not of his horns protruding low.

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[1] For other unpublished poems, *vide* Appendix I.

And others I have seen with calm disdain
O'erlook the immediate strife, and gaze afar;
Eternity was in that gaze; the jar
Of temporal broil assailed not its domain.

Some cliffs are full of pity; in the sweep
Of their bluff brows a kindly tolerance waits,
And smiles upon the petulant sea, that rates
And fumes, and scolds against the patient steep.

And some are joyous with a hearty joy,
And in mock-earnest wage the busy fight:
So may you see a giant with delight
Parrying the buffets of a saucy boy!

Remonstrant others stand—a wild surprise
Glares from their crests against the insolent throng;
Half frightened, half indignant at the wrong,
They look appealingly to those heedless skies.

And other some are of a sleepy mood,
Who care not if the tempest does its worst;
What is't to them if bounding billows burst,
Or winds assail them with their jeerings rude?"[1]

There are also poems dealing directly with the sea, such as the impressionist description of the Bristol Channel:—

"The sulky old grey brute!
But when the sunset strokes him,
Or twilight shadows coax him,

[1] *Poems*, "St. Bee's Head," p. 74.

He gets so silver-milky,
He turns so soft and silky,
He'd make a water-spaniel for King Knut."[1]

And the boisterous "Triton Esuriens," that begins with a clamorous demand to the earth:—

"How cold and hungry is the sea to-day!
How clamorous against the thrifty shore,
That yields not of her store,
Save sands, and weeds, and pebbles of the bay!
'Give more! give more!'
Methinks I hear him say;
'And drive the hunger of my heart away!'"[2]

But the most personal feelings of the poet with regard to the sea are to be found in his lines called "Star Steering":—

"Oh, will it ever come again
That I upon the boundless main
Shall steer me by the light of stars?
Now, locked with sandy bars,
Life's narrowing channel bids me mark
Each serviceable spark
That Holm or Lundy flings upon the dark,
Thus man is more to me—
But oh, the gladness of the outer sea!
O Venus! Mars!
When shall I steer by you again, O stars!"[3]

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[1] *Poems:* Clevedon Verses, "The Bristol Channel," p. 662.

[2] *Ibid.*, "Triton Esuriens," p. 727.

[3] *Ibid.*, "Star Steering," p. 660.

His wish for the "outer sea" is typical of his poetry. We get the idea that he always wrote out of doors, so breezy and fresh are his verses. Great forces attracted him. The illimitable sea, the generating sun, forgiveness and love. He knew the sea like a personal friend—realizing all its passions and petulancies. His poems are full of wonderful hints of it, aspirations for it, and lessons to be learned from it.

GOD AS PORTRAYED IN BROWN'S POEMS.

It is in his poems which speak of God that Brown's highest thoughts are to be discovered. It may be stated at the outstart that Brown was a Pantheist. He realized much more fully than many Church of England clergymen would care to do that God was everywhere. He expresses this belief in "My Garden":—

> "My garden is a lovesome thing—God wot!
> Rose plot,
> Fringed pool,
> Ferned grot—
> The veriest school
> Of peace; and yet the fool
> Contends that God is not.—
> Not God; in gardens! when the eve is cool?
> Nay, but I have a sign!
> 'Tis very sure God walks in mine."[1]

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[1] *Poems*, "My Garden," p. 669.

He says it, but under a cloak of mysticism, in his powerful poem "Disguises":—

"High stretched upon the swinging yard,
I gather in the sheet;
But it is hard
And stiff, and one cries haste,
Then He that is most dear in my regard
Of all the crew gives aidance meet;
But from His hands, and from His feet,
A glory spreads wherewith the night is starred.
Moreover of a cup most bitter-sweet
With fragrance as of nard,
And myrrh, and cassia spiced,
He proffers me to taste.
Then I to Him—'Art Thou the Christ?'
He saith—'Thou say'st.'

Like to an ox
That staggers 'neath the mortal blow,
She grinds upon the rocks:—
Then straight and low
Leaps forth the levelled line, and in our quarter locks,
The cradle's rigged; with swerving of the blast
We go,
Our captain last—
Demands
'Who fired that shot?' Each silent stands—
Ah, sweet perplexity!
This too was He."[1]

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[1] *Poems*, "Disguises," p. 698.

In examining this portion of Brown's work, one is struck by his perfect trust in God—in God's goodness, in God's power, and in God's love. This absolute faith in his Maker gives the poet a firm belief in immortality.

Writing of the death of his wife, he says—

"One thing emerges—my absolute belief in immortality. I am not naturally a materialist—that is a plant not native to my mind; but scales of materialism have sometimes grown upon my eyes. They now vanish utterly, and I am dazzled and confounded by the inevitable presence, the close connatural rebound of the belief.

"I have always been an idealist, subject to these dim spots of material feculence that from time to time have obscured my vision.

"Now I feel my body to be nothing but an integument, and the inveteracy of the material association to be a tie little more than momentary, and quite casual. Death is the key to another room, and it is the very next room."[1]

Such was his faith that he is able to write—

"But if the *prochain numéro* is never to be issued, and our story breaks off quite sudden and incompletely, I am quite satisfied; I would not trouble

[1] *Letters*, vol. i. p. 129. To J. R. Mozley (May 23rd, 1880).

the 'Omnipotens et Sempiterne' about such a trifle."[1]

He did not change these opinions. Answering some one who questioned him on these matters, he writes—"Must I be always breaking stones on the road to heaven? examining and re-examining every inch of the way? proving every rung of Jacob's ladder? Well, no; I have other things to do."[2]

His poems bear the stamp of his belief. When the radiance of his years is vanishing, he writes:—

> "Eastward the valley of my soul was lit
> This morning; now the West hath laid
> Upon its fields the festal robe,
> And the East hath shade.
> Full soon the night shall fit
> Her star-bespangled serge
> On hill, and rock, and bay;
> But even then behind the mountain globe
> God makes a verge
> Of dawn that shall be day!"[3]

What a perfect belief in a life after death is contained in the last line! what a lovely hope for the man that realized that his days on earth were numbered!

His quiet confidence in God is to be found in

[1] *Letters*, vol. ii. p. 247. To J. A. Symonds (February 5th, 1892).

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 216. To Miss Graves (June 15th, 1897).

[3] *Poems*, "Evensong," p. 701."

many of his poems, but nowhere is it more beautifully expressed than in "Planting":—

"Who would be planted, chooseth not the soil
Or here or there,
Or loam or peat,
Wherein he best may grow,
And bring forth guerdon of the planter's toil.
The lily is most fair,
But says not—'I will only blow
Upon a southen land!' The cedar makes no coil
What rock shall owe
The springs that wash his feet;
The crocus cannot arbitrate the foil
That for its purple radiance is most meet.
Lord even so
I ask one prayer,
The which if it be granted,
It skills not where
Thou plantest me, only I would be planted."[1]

Sometimes his yearning to understand more fully how God reveals Himself to us, in a world of visibility and sensation, causes him to be perplexed. He is sometimes unable to recognize the prevailing immanence of God, and longs for the hour of sleep, when his mind shall be able to fly away and discover the true reasons:—

"Oh! but if God would make a deep suspense,
And draw me perfect from th' adhesive sheath;

---

[1] *Poems*, "Planting," p. 732.

If all the veils and swathings of pretence,
  Dropt from me, sunk beneath,
Then would I get me very far from hence.

I'd come to Him with one swift arrow-dart,
  Aimed at the zenith of th' o'erbrooding blue;
Straight to the centre of His awful heart
  The flight long-winged and true
Should bear me rapt through all the spheres that part."[1]

Dreams do not come to his hours of repose to enlighten him, so he looks forward to Death as the solver of all mysteries:—

"I needs must meet him, for he hath beset
  All roads that men do travel, hill and plain;
  Nor ought that breathes shall pass,
  Unchallenged of his debt.
  But what, and if, when I shall whet
  My front to meet him, then, as in a glass,
  Darkly, I shall behold that he is twain—
  Earthward a mask of jet,
  Heavenward a coronet
  Sun-flushed with roseate gleams. In any case
  It hardly can be called a mortal pain
  To meet whom met I ne'er shall meet again."[2]

It is not only as the solver of mysteries, who must be met, that Brown regards death; but also as the gate of immortality:—

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[1] *Poems*, "Dreams," p. 731.
[2] *Ibid.*, "Obviam," p. 733.

"Speak, Death, oh speak! What high command
restrains
The dark disclosure? Is it thine own will
Thou workest, I adjure thee, shape of fear?
Then from the awful face a shadow wanes,
And, clad in robes of light unspeakable,
God's loveliest angel sits beside me here."[1]

His lovely idea of the great attention that is paid in heaven over the first prayer of a little child is yet another example of his transporting his readers into the heavenly courts; but it is also an example of the manner in which he treats of children. Nearly all the children, in his short poems, are introduced to teach some lesson; sometimes it is the lesson of God's love for them:—

"I was in heaven one day, when all the prayers
Came in, and angels bore them up the stairs
Unto a place where he
Who was ordained to such a ministry
Should sort them—so that in that palace bright,
The presence-chamber might be duly dight;
For they were like to flowers of various bloom;
And a divinest fragrance filled the room.

Then did I see how the great sorter chose
One flower that seemed to me a hedgeling rose,
And from the tangled press
Of that irregular loveliness
Set it apart, and—'This,' I heard him say,
'Is for the Master.' So upon his way

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[1] *Poems*, "In Memoriam," p. 68.

He would have passed: then I to him—
'Whence is this rose? O thou of cherubim
The chiefest.' 'Know'st thou not?' he said, and smiled;
'This is the first prayer of a little child.'"[1]

Some verses from his poem entitled "Pain," one of the finest in the volume, will fittingly conclude the quotations from his lyrics:—

"The man that hath great griefs, I pity not:
'Tis something to be great
In any wise, and hint the larger state,
Though but in shadow of a shade, God wot!

Moreover, while we wait the possible,
This man hath touched the fact,
And probed till he hath felt the core, where, packed
In pulpy folds, resides the ironic ill.

And while we others sip the obvious sweet—
Lip-licking after-taste
Of glutinous rind, lo! this man hath made haste,
And pressed the sting that holds the central seat.

For thus it is God stings us into life,
Provoking actual souls
From bodily systems, giving us the poles
That are our own, not merely balanced strife.

But tenfold one is he, who feels all pains
Not partial, knowing them
As ripples parted from the gold-beaked stem
Wherewith God's galley onward ever strains.

[1] *Poems*, "The Prayers," p. 687.

To him the sorrows are the tension-thrills
Of that serene endeavour
Which yields to God for ever and for ever
The joy that is more ancient than the hills."[1]

This appreciation would be incomplete without some short summary to correlate and unify that which makes Brown one of the men of most indisputable genius whom the nineteenth century produced.

No novel philosophy, no new belief find place in Brown's works. He does but lay stress, in an earnest and convincing manner, on the old truths of Christianity. No doubt or uncertainty dims his belief in the God whom he depicts to us, not as an uncertain blind power that makes for righteousness or a convenient name for an unknowable something behind phenomena, but, however much transcending our finite ideals, at least a personality, with a purpose guiding the world, and a plan directing the apparently blind sweeping forward of things in perpetual change.

No vain longing, no futile searching sums up his conviction of a future state. He realized immortality, not as a hollow trickery, not as an unfathomable myth, nor as a return of unconscious energy to the nebulæ from which it arose; but as a survival of the personality beyond death, a continual upward progress towards perfection carried forward from this world to the world

[1] *Poems*, "Pain," p. 670.

beyond the grave. A world so near as to seem to him no farther than "the next room."

Brown created no school of natural poetry; no new ideas are noticeable in his pastoral verses. He only triumphed in his intimate co-existence with Nature. He loved, with an almost incomprehensible reality, the silence of his natural surroundings. He loved—

> "The single rose, the brook, the primal spring.
> Loving, he shared the good of everything;
> For pine and primrose filled him with their balm,
> The mountains lent him ruggedness and calm,
> And the waves taught him their melodious swing,
> While he taught Mona—these, indeed were joys."[1]

The work of a poet must always be intuitive rather than ratiocinative. This being so, and Brown being a Manxman, he created a poetry impregnated with Manx colour. That nothing might be wanting to the picture, his lines are interspersed with Manx idiom and written in dialect. This realism has cost him popularity; but no popularity or open-mouthed wonder of all the world, continued even for a long series of years, can make a man great.

The characteristics of any poet's genius are seen clearly in his versification. Brown's verse is

[1] "Victory," by Professor Hanby Hay, Philadelphia; December 12th, 1897. Printed in the *Isle of Man Times*, January 1st, 1898.

vigorous, grave, gay, delicate. Easy flowing, vigorous lines, eloquent lines, persuasive lines we can find in plenty; lines in which colour melts into music and both become magical. And this finish is apparent in a simplicity so intense, so expressive, and so casual in seeming as only the finest elaboration could extract from the complexities of Nature. His preference was for the homeliest words, and for rhythms in which the art consists in a seeming disregard of art; and with these plain, unadorned words, the words that come first to our lips when we speak to one another, he paints scenes and depicts characters of vivid sincerity, grave reality, and religious conviction. This felicitously simple art in which style is never a separate grace, but part of the very foundation of the design, is the expression of a nature in which intensity of feeling is united with the clear-sighted humour of the Manxman.

The personality of Brown cannot be ignored by the surliest of critics. His generosity,[1] love of

[1] The Rev. D. S. Cowley, Rector of Bride, told the author that Tom Brown was the soul of generosity, he lived for all he could *give* as meaner men live for all they can *get*. The carved Communion Table in Bride Parish Church is a perpetual memorial to his generosity. In 1895 the rector had the misfortune to meet with an accident. The next day Brown went to see him and said—"Don't you worry about your work, I'll be your curate." For eight weeks he undertook all the work in the parish, walking in the five miles from Ramsey, where he was living.

truth, and hatred of sham are everywhere in evidence. No one can deny that Brown was a genuine man, which in itself is a great matter. No affectation, fantasticality, or distortion dwelt in him; no shadow of cant—

"On hate
And greed and false-pretence, he shut the gate."[1]

We are not called upon to place great men of his stamp, as if they were collegians, in a class list. It is best to take, with thankfulness, what each has to give. If Brown has not Shakespeare's richness and vast compass, or Milton's sublime and unflagging strength, or Dante's severe, vivid, ardent force of vision, he has a joyous picturesqueness and fellow-feeling, a freedom of eye and heart, or, in a word, a general healthiness that prove him to be amongst the foremost writers of modern literature.

1 "Victory," by Professor Hanby Hay. *Isle of Man Times*, January 1st, 1898.

APPENDIX I.

Owing to the kindness of Mrs. Williamson (Brown's sister), the author has been enabled to quote on pp. 17, 201-203, and 209-210 some of Brown's unpublished earlier efforts. In the following pages others are given:—

SHUT NOT OUT THE DEAD.

The South wind whistles o'er the lea,
  The night is dark and drear,
And there comes a voice from the far-off sea,
  A voice of gloom and fear;
And it's cold, cold, cold
  Where the quiet dead are lying.
Then must we leave them there alone?
While the rain is patt'ring on the stone,
  And the clouds above are flying.

The storm raves round the belfry tower
  With a shout of mirth and madness,
And the leaves that fall beneath its power
  Are answering in sadness.
Then close not ye the cottage door,
  Oh! shut not out the dead,
But let our lamps some radiance pour
  Upon their narrow bed;

For it's cold, cold, cold,
Where the quiet dead are lying,
And we will not leave them there alone,
While the rain is patt'ring on the stone,
And the clouds above are flying.

T. E. B., *September 30th*, 1849.

CHORUS OF ANGELS.

COME, brother, come to the Land of Love,
To the land of the pure and blest above;
Come, for the stars are bright in heaven,
And to thee the grace to rise is given—
Come, brother, come.

Fear not the silent shade of night,
For soon shalt thou wander in fields of light;
Heed not the dark fiend's laugh of despair,
As he skulks away in the cow'ring air;
But list' to the sounds of all harmony
That seraph tongues are discoursing to thee,
And hark to the voice of the Mighty Son:
"Well done, young soldier of Christ, well done!"
Come, brother, come.

Far away, far away from a world of woe,
Past the moon, past the stars, to yon gate we go;
Bright angels are throwing the portals wide,
It is the city where we abide;
Come, brother, come.

Great God! to Thee
The tearful soul of this child we bring!
Behold! and see
If it be Thine, Eternal King!

And lowly kneel, thou servant dear,
With a trustful love, and a reverent fear;
For thou art come to the realms of day,
And the Father shall kiss thy tears away;
Kneel, brother, kneel.

T. E. B., *October* 1850.

THE LOVE OF CHRIST.

THE Love of Christ! oh, precious words,
More blest than all the earth affords;
Dearer than hidden harmonies,
Or death-song of a dying breeze;
Sweeter than angel's footfall, when
Dark shadows gather in the glen;
And I hear them talk as they pass by,
Of heaven and hope and mystery—
The Love of Christ.

The Love of Christ! rise, rise, my soul!
I hear the seraph anthem roll,
And a harp that's swept by a spirit hand,
And it breathes the sounds of another land;
But the song is of earth and a starry gem,
And a Babe that was born at Bethlehem.
They're singing it now in the stilly sky,
And my heart goes forth to them secretly—
The Love of Christ.

The Love of Christ, the boundless love,
It shines a beauteous light above,
And from the eternal age it shone
When night was a virgin on her throne

And day was unborn, and worlds were none
But all the bright beams from Eternity's eye
Are centring in Glory on Calvary,
And the white-wing'd cherubs are basking there,
And Satan has shrunk to his hellish lair,
From the Love of Christ.

T. E. B.

These poems are very interesting as showing how Brown's early life converged towards piety. The same fact is noticeable throughout his works. His contact with the world never effaced the natural devotion that was the outcome of his early training.

At this time he made several translations, two of which may be quoted:—

CALLIMACHI HYMNUS.

(*Nearly literal.*)

I'LL bear my sword in a myrtle bough
Like them, the young, the brave, the free,
Who laid the bloody tyrant low
And gave fair Athens liberty.

Thou art not dead, Harmodius,
But in the Islands fair
Full happy dwell'st thou, where we're told
Rests from his race Achilles bold,
And Diomede is there.

Like them, the young, the brave, the free,
I'll bear my sword in a myrtle bough,
When 'mid the Athenian chivalry
They laid the cursed Hippachus low.

Through every land your fame shall go,
And thine Aristogeiton be
Renowned, who laid the tyrant low,
And gave fair Athens liberty.

T. E. B.

[NOTE BY T. E. B.—It being almost impossible to introduce the two proper names Harmodius and Aristogeiton consecutively in English metre, I've brought them in in distinct verses.]

TRANSLATION OF A CHORUS IN THE "AJAX" OF SOPHOCLES.

HAIL, glorious Salamis!
The wand'ring Ajax home.
Dear Isle of bliss
Who dwellest amid the wavy foam
All peaceful, while thy son is doomed to roam.

Alas! the weary, untold time
Since I beheld thy beauteous clime;
While on the blood-stained plains of Troy
Vain hopes of need my thoughts employ;
And Time, as on his slow wheels languish,
Weighs down my sickening soul in anguish.
But still a wretched hope remains,
The poor reward for all my pains,
That I shall reach the wished-for bourne,
From which the Pilgrims ne'er return.
That silent land invisible,
The cold oblivious gloom of hell.
Then, oh! the crowning woe of all!
Lord Ajax sits within his hall,

By heaven deprived of hope and gladness,
Mate of terror, mate of madness,
For a heavenly hand the evil gave
For mortal skill avails to save.
'Tis he who once thy shores
  Left furious for the fight,
Who now deplores
  'Mid mourning friends his injured right,
  And feeds with wrongs his soul apart from common light.

For the deeds of old he wrought!
  The deeds of high emprise
Are counted but as nought
  In the cursed Atreidae's eyes.
And woe for his ancient mother!
  When she hears the direful tale.
Oh! I ween there is no other
  Can like a mother wail.
I've heard the gentle nightingale
  Sing piteous from the tree,
But it's not so sad amid the vale
  As thy cry, poor Eriboe!
For there shall be beatings on thy breast,
  And tearings of thy hair,
And a heart that thinketh not of rest
  In its wild, wild despair.
Better in hell were he;
  The noble son of a noble sire,
Ay, better to be
  Where he might hide his sullen ire.
For he is not as he used to be
Among the fair knights of chivalry,
But he dwells apart by the roaring sea.

Alas! for the mighty Telamon
And all his bitter grief,
When he hears the fate of his hapless son
Far, far from all relief.
For near him Æacus lay dead,
Such grief our isle hath visited.

T. E. B.

APPENDIX II.

It may be convenient to collect together in one place, the various dates of the editions of Brown's poems; and the chief articles he wrote during his lifetime:—

POEMS.

1873. **Betsy Lee**[1] was published in *Macmillan's Magazine*, vol. xxvii. p. 441, vol. xxviii. p. 1. This poem first saw light in the *Isle of Man Times*. It was also published in *Every Saturday*, vol. xiv., pp. 527, 559, 585. The poem has 1,594 lines. In the same year an expurgated edition was published in book form by Macmillan.

1881. **Fo'c's'le Yarns**, including—

Betsy Lee.

Christmas Rose.[2] A poem of 2,273 lines.

Captain Tom and Captain Hugh.[3] A poem of 1,153 lines.

Tommy Big Eyes.[4] A poem of 3,340 lines; was published by Macmillan.

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[1] See p. 126 and Appendix III.

[2] See p. 172.

[3] See p. 115.

[4] See p. 143.

1887. **The Doctor.**[1] A poem of 4,312 lines; was published by Sonneschein, in book form. This poem had appeared in 1885-86, in the *Isle of Man Times*. It was also printed in *Living Age*, vol. clxxii. p. 684.

1889. The **Fo'c's'le Yarns** ran into its second edition.

The Manx Witch.[2] A poem of 3,117 lines, and other poems; was published by Macmillan.

1892. **Old John,**[3] **and other Poems**; was published by Macmillan.

1893. **Nell Corso** appeared in the *National Observer* of June 10th.[4]

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[1] See p. 159. [2] See p. 97. [3] See pp. 13-15.

[4] This poem is not contained in the "Collected Works":—

"Two waftures of great eyes
A second's thousandth part—
One sucked me down the maalstrom of the heart,
The other ebbed me forth to lonely skies.

Scorn? No! why should she scorn?
Coquettish play of fence?
Not so, but glorious might of innocence—
Of such large blood are Roman women born.

She knows what joy I caught
That moment, how I rushed
Right to the centre of her life, yet blushed
She not at all, nor showed a treacherous thought.

Is not this good above
Most goods for which we sigh?
To pick this obvious love as we pass by,
And pass, and pick another obvious love."

1894. **A Dialogue between Hom. Veg and Ballure's River,** printed in *Isle of Man Times*, 15th December.

1895. **Roman Women,**[1] was printed in the August number of *New Review*.

1895. **White Foxglove,**[2] appeared in the October number of the *New Review*.

1895. **Job the White,**[3] was published in the December number of the *New Review*.

1900. **The Collected Poems of T. E. Brown,** edited by Mr. H. F. Brown, Mr. H. G. Dakyns, and with an Introduction by Mr. W. E. Henley; were published by Macmillan. This edition of the "Fo'c'stle Yarns" is still more unnecessarily expurgated.

1900. **Letters of T. E. Brown,** edited, with an Introductory Memoir, by Mr. S. T. Irwin; were published by Constable.

ARTICLES.

1892. **Rights of Way in the Isle of Man,** appeared in the *Ramsey Courier*, November 19th.

1893. **Manx Characters,** a series of articles appearing in the *Ramsey Courier* of June 17th, July 1st, August 5th, September 23rd, and September 30th.

1893. **Rights of Way in the Isle of Man,** which appeared in the *Ramsey Courier* of December 24th.

1893. **Manx Life and Manxland,** a criticism of Mr. Hall Caine's novel, *The Manxman*,[4] appeared in the *Contemporary Review*, vol. lxvi. p. 642.

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[1] See p. 193.
[2] See p. 63.
[3] See p. 182.
[4] See p. 58.

1895. **Sir Philip Sidney,** appeared in the *New Review* vol. xii. p. 415.

1895. **Rev. Robert Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy,** appeared in the September number of the *New Review.*

1897. **Edmund Spenser,** appeared in the *New Review*, vol. xvi. p. 393.

Besides these he wrote several shorter criticisms (such as his review of the *Diocesan History of Sodor and Man*, by A. W. Moore), and various short signed articles. He wrote for *Brown's Popular Guide* the articles **How to spend Seven Days in the Isle of Man,** and **How to Use the Manx Railways.**

APPENDIX III.

THE editors of the *Collected Poems* have expurgated many passages from "Betsy Lee" as it was originally printed in *Macmillan's Magazine*. For the sake of comparison the passages that have been suppressed are subjoined:—

Following line 18.

(Ay, and her name it was Betsy Lee.)

"Betsy Lee—you thought there was love
In the case—did you, Bob? So help me, I'll shove
This boot down your throat, if you don't stop laughin'!
It's a regular stopper that snigglin' and choffin';
When a man has a yarn to spin, d'ye see,
He must spin it away and spin it free.
Or else—well, perhaps, there isn't no call;
But just don't do it again, that's all."

Following line 32.

(God knows what it is if it isn't pisin.)

"You've bathed in a dub that has seaweed in it,
And you've dropt your legs to rest a minute,
And let them go lazily dingle-dangle,
And felt them caught by the twistin' tangle;
That's something like the kind of job,
But ah, I loved Betsy, I did—now, Bob."

Following line 58.

(To be your sweetheart, and you never knowin'.)

"Her father and mine used to hob and nob,
Being next-door neighbours—— Avast that, Bob!
You didn't laugh? You lubberly skunk,
It's div'lish nice for a fool in his bunk
To be lyin' and laughin', and me goin' on
And tellin' such things. Now isn't it, John?
Eh, Bill? He says he meant nothin' by it?
Well, I only want a chap to be quiet;
For there's wounds, my mates, that won't take healin's,
An' if a man's a man, he's got his feelings.
All right! I thank you, William, my lad,
I will taste it—it's not so bad."

Following line 92.

(For ever and ever and ever more!)

"There's Bob again, and also Dick!
Now the question is, which am I goin' to lick?
Though it's an ugly sort of a thing to lather
A lad, when you was shipmates with his father.
You—ast my pardon! Well, there let it end,
For a son is a son and a friend is a friend."

Following line 184.

(Ah, the kisses in showers! ah, the things that we said!)

"And when—— Now, Bob, I know what you're at—
O God in heaven! not that! not that!
I know what you're thinkin'! I know your surt—
Your trallopin' madams, and all that dirt;
I know the lot with their cheeks so pink,
And their eyes swimmin' and blazin' with drink,

With blackguard talk for whoever they meet,
And a-squealin' and scuttlin' about the street.
I know their laugh too—aw, I know it well—
The sort of laugh you might laugh in hell.
Oh yes, they can laugh; but just you mind them,
And you'll see the divil that's grinnin' behind them.
Now listen, Bob! and listen you, Jem:
Did you think that Betsy was like one of them?
Like one of them; why that's what you'd wish!
Well, there's chaps that's straight like a cuttle-fish,
For though the water be clear and blue
As heaven above, they'll manage to brew
Some stuff in their brains or their lights or their gall,
Or the Divil knows where that'd muddy it all.
No, no, my lads, that's not what I meant—
Innocent—Innocent—Innocent.
Aw, I'll say it, aw, I'll swear it, and swear it again,
For ever and ever and ever, Amen."

Following line 289.

(But he only laughed, and drew away.)

"And they all of them laughed to hear me swear—
But Betsy—of course—she wasn' there."

Before line 310.

"A blessed ould fool? Very well, very well;
But a blessed ould fool's got a story to tell,
And a blessed ould fool must have his own way,
For a song is a song, and a say is a say.
But may be there's none of you wants any more.
O Bob Williams! I heard you snore;
Or was it a pig with a twist in his snout?
Take a rope's-end, Bill, and hit him a clout:
(But—of coorse! of coorse—ah, little Sim!)"

Following line 491.

(Rittle-rattle—the talk it came.)

"Oh hoky-poky—Jerusalem!
Now I didn't mind her being civil,
But she seemed so pleased to see the Divil
I might have been a thousand miles away."

Following line 783.

(To hisself, and lookin' down and walkin'.)

"Now there's some of them pazons they're allis shoutin'
And tearin' at you, and ravin' and routin',
And they gets you penned with a lot of others
In a coop, and they calls you sisters and brothers;
And you can't get out, so the beggars raises
Their vice and gives it you like blazes.
What's the good of all that surt?
Sweatin' and actin' and bustin' their shirt,
Shiverin' the very roaf to splanthers.
Aw! I never liked them roarin' ranthers;
Yes, our pazon was quiet, but mind ye, don't doubt
But the man knew well what he was about."

Following line 970.

(Her stupid ould head like a hen with a toppin'!)

"Did she cuss? ay, she cussed, and it's real bad hearing,
Mind ye! a woman's cussin' or swearin'—
Partikler your mauther; still for all its true.
There's differin' sorts of cussin', too,
For there's cussin' that comes like fire from heaven—
Fierce and strong, like the blast that's driven
From the mouth of a seven-times heated furnace,
That's, you see, when a man's in earnes'.

And there's cussin' that's no use whatever,
Slibberin', slobberin', slushin' slaver;
A fool's lips runnin' with brimstone froth,
The muckin' scum of the Devil's own broth."

Following the line 986.

(And me the very spit of my father!)

"And what *was* a by-child, if you come to that,
It wasn' a dog, and it wasn' a cat,
But a man's own flesh, and the love and the life
Was in it—let be she wasn' your wife.
And after all why shouldn' she be?
She was a strappin' wench, was Jinny Magee."

Following line 1223.

(To speak to him first or write a letter.)

"Or wait my chance and all that stuff,
And then I could kill him easy enough.
Aisy! that's not what I want at all,
I says, 'I'll stand on his body and call
The people, and let them know right well
It's me that sent the villain to hell.'
'And then you'll be hung,' said she, and
I laughed."

Following line 1399.

(She says, and she smiled! the woman smiled!)

"So I took him up and I says, quite low,
'Is it Taylor's?' I said. 'Oh no! no! no!'
'All right,' I says; 'and his name it's Simmy.'"

One or two changes of words in the two editions have not been given. It will be readily seen that most of the expurgations greatly add to the pleasant sequence of the piece, but some might have been left with advantage. The suppression after the line 184 takes away from the poem some lines of high moral value. Following as it does the description of "Kisses in showers," this passage is a very forcible one and serves to teach a high-toned lesson. The passage after line 783 is so boyishly humorous, that it might have remained without offending any one. The lines that are omitted after line 1223 are extremely picturesque as describing the wrathful impetuosity of the wronged sailor. As a character sketch they are decidedly fine, and carry out more completely the picture Brown wished to draw of Tom Baynes.

The passage expurgated after line 1399 serves to show us that Taylor was not an absolute villain, and accurately defines his position.

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THE END.

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